

Shevardnadze denies Bloch report

PARIS (R) — Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze Friday denied links with the Soviet Union. "He never had any relations with us, no relations which could provoke any suspicion whatever," Shevardnadze told reporters on arrival at Orly airport outside Paris. Shevardnadze was in France to attend an international conference on Cambodia. "They say he was a good diplomat," Shevardnadze said. "We are truly astonished to see all this fuss... without there being any proof. You can pin anything on anyone that way," he added. Shevardnadze is due to meet U.S. Secretary of State James Baker at the Soviet ambassador's residence in Paris Saturday for private talks. The New York Times Friday quoted an unnamed official involved in the investigation of Bloch as saying the diplomat had admitted to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) he had worked for the Soviet Union for many years and had been paid "a lot of money" (see page 8). In Vienna, police chief Robert Danzinger said Friday Bloch apparently had contacts with a suspected Soviet agent holding a forged passport.

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Polish party in crucial talks

WARSAW (Agencies) — President Wojciech Jaruzelski urged Poland's Communist Party to take a "painful" look at its declining fortunes Friday at a meeting expected to result in his own departure as party chief. "He needs a painfully frank appraisal of the situation after the 'round table' (government-opposition reform pact) and the bitter lesson of the recent elections," Jaruzelski said in an opening speech. Party leaders spoke out bluntly as the central committee debated how to revive the party's fortunes after humiliation by the Solidarity opposition in partly-free elections last month. The 230-member body met during a battle between the party and Solidarity — which now outnumbers the Communists in parliament — over forming a new government, and amid fears of riots if food prices are freed to double or triple next week. "The danger of an explosion of a huge wave of strikes is real," opposition economists told Jaruzelski in an open letter. The official Communist-led OPZZ trade unions, which claim seven million members and are the biggest organisation in the country, forecast "a wave of massive dissatisfaction" and said it would have to support action by the workers.

Beirut becomes ghost town

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Thousands of war-weary Lebanese fled the inferno of Beirut and nearby towns Friday after five hours of artillery and rocket barrages between Syrian-backed Lebanese militiamen and troops and militias loyal to army commander Michel Aoun.

"What have children done to be butchered like that?" asked one of the refugees, Alia Shami, as she loaded the family car.

Hundreds of vehicles formed convoys carrying frightened civilians to safer areas.

Security sources said thousands of rockets and shells pounded Beirut overnight, as well as nearby towns and far-flung villages in the Bekaa Valley, some 60 kilometres from the capital.

"An inferno rings one third of Lebanon," said Al Diar newspaper, published in east Beirut.

Once crowded and lively, Beirut has been steadily drained of people since mid-March when Aoun launched his challenge to the Syrian role in the country.

According to some estimates more than three-quarters of the residents have fled to other parts of the country or beyond, fleeing

through Syria and Cyprus. The overnight shelling, Beirut's second night of terror in a row, killed seven people and wounded about 80, trapping some families in blazing buildings. Fighting eased at dawn.

"All firefighters and rescuers are urged to rush to extinguish the fires," the Voice of the Homeland Radio said.

Streets were littered with shattered glass, broken trees and twisted metal from burning cars. Power and telephones cables hung broken from their pylons, and the only traffic in the city centre was emergency vehicles and hearses.

Shelling has increased in intensity over the last two weeks, dashing hopes for Arab League efforts to bridge differences between Aoun and Syria.

Despite intensive efforts since May, a committee grouping the leaders of Saudi Arabia, Algeria and Morocco has failed to consolidate a shaky ceasefire arranged by the Arab League that month.

Political sources said the escalation was meant to exert pressure on the foreign ministers of the three committee members.

confrontation "in terms of firepower used and destruction wreaked."

It started at 8 p.m. (1700 GMT) Thursday, when gunners in west Beirut and north Lebanon joined forces to blast Jounieh, east Beirut and the port of Byblos.

Aoun's forces struck back at Syrian positions with 155-mm howitzers and their allies from the Lebanese Forces, the main rightist militia, opened up indiscriminately against west Beirut. The shelling tapered off at 4 a.m. (0100 GMT) Friday.

People emerged from bunkers in the morning to take stock of the losses and clean up debris. Supermarkets were jammed with shoppers buying food and bottled water, anticipating another bombardment.

"Is this apocalypse?" wondered Hisham-Sinno, a grocer whose shop was blown to smithereens. "I'm destroyed. I have no source of income left."

"Let them all roast in hell, those who are roasting Beirut," said Albert Tawil, a bank employee in east Beirut. "I wish one day I'll drink their blood."

An electric tools warehouse in west Beirut's Sadat district blazed from midnight to midday. Fire engines were unable to battle the blaze because of water shortage. Smoke blackened the facades of neighbouring apartment buildings.

"We're being killed in our beds... Beirut is being massacred and no one in the Arab World or the outside world seems to care," said an announcer on the Voice of Lebanon radio, his own voice choking with emotion.

From its Tunis headquarters, the Arab League issued an appeal for the shelling to stop so its mediators could resume their task.

"This blind and bloody fighting must cease immediately, to save Lebanon by clearing the way for the three-member Arab committee to follow up its attempts to end discord," Secretary General Chadi Khleif said in a statement.

When the three heads of state last met in Algeria at the end of June, they said they wanted to see the fighting ended before convening Lebanon's parliament at a neutral venue abroad.

PLO denies any shift in stand on election plan

TUNIS (Agencies) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) conditions for agreeing to a proposal for elections in the occupied territories, as conveyed by a Soviet official and other intermediaries, have not changed from its publicly stated positions, a spokesman said Friday.

Ahmad Abdul Rahman, the PLO spokesman, said in a telephone interview with the AP in Tunis that news reports of a softened stance were inaccurate.

Political sources said the escalation was meant to exert pressure on the foreign ministers

tionally supervised elections, and a 27-month timetable guaranteeing independence on a specific date.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has proposed elections in which the Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip would choose representatives to negotiate an interim self-rule plan, with talks to be held later on the "final status" of the territories.

Shamir has made clear that the PLO's conditions are unacceptable, and says he would refuse to deal with the PLO.

Labour Party legislators in Israel have said a softened PLO position has been set out in a U.S. government document. An Israeli official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Wednesday that the document was relayed to Israel by Soviet Middle East envoy Gennady Terterov, who met an aide to Vice-Premier Shimon Peres after holding talks earlier with Arafat.

In Washington, State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler denied that such a memorandum existed.

The United States is working on a realistic approach to elections, and we believe there is serious engagement on the Shamir election proposal, "Tutwiler told reporters. "Beyond that, I'm not going to characterize anyone else's position."

Asked if he meant that the PLO was pursuing more seriously than before talks with the United States on the elections plan, she refused to cite a specific party.

Tutwiler made the statement a day after U.S. Ambassador Robert Pelletreau held another in a series of meetings with PLO officials.

But she said she did not mean to suggest that hour-long talks in Tunis with PLO representative Hakim Balawi had reached a new level.

Tutwiler said Wednesday the PLO had proposed a number of conditions that would make progress on the elections plan impossible.

One condition is the demand for an independent Palestinian state. She refused to name any others.

Israeli newspapers and the New York Times also reported Thursday that the PLO had softened its conditions for elections.

Jamil Hilal, director of the PLO information department in Tunis, called the reports "complete rubbish."

Tutwiler also appeared to call the reports into question.

"Freely in the Middle East there are press reports which may or may not characterise accurately a party's position. History shows that one should not base negotiations, policies, or actions on what may be inaccurate or unauthorised statements. We deal with official statements and actions as they are relayed to us through official channels," she said.

Abdul Rahman confirmed Friday that Terterov met first with Arafat, then with Peres aide, but said he relayed the well-established PLO conditions for accepting elections.

The PLO spokesman said Israeli leaders were behind the reports of a softened stance "so they can say to the Americans that the PLO is coming to their position..." Mr. Shamir is trying to win time.

Senior PLO official Salah Khalaf has said the group has not authorised anyone to negotiate with the Israeli government, the Kuwait daily Al Watan reported Friday.

"The PLO did not authorise any Palestinian inside the occupied territories to negotiate with the Israeli government," Khalaf said in an interview with Al Watan.

Khalaf was commenting on reports that Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip who met with Shamir did so on instructions from the PLO leadership.

Al Watan quoted Khalaf as saying the PLO leadership "did not ask the four Palestinians who met the Israeli prime minister recently to do so."

He said the PLO "is against allowing any party outside the legitimate institutions the power to open talks with the Israelis under any circumstances."

Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens defended contacts with Palestinians in the occupied territories Friday, saying failure to consult them was one of Israel's greatest mistakes of the past two decades.

Arens, considered a hardline member of the coalition government, ridiculed political rival rapprochement with the right who had criticised the government's talks with Palestinians.

"It is hard for me to understand the logic of anyone who says we must stay in the territory... to live together with this Arab population but not to speak with them," Arens told army radio.

Reports conflict over cause of KAL crash near Tripoli

KAL (Agencies) — Korean Air Lines (KAL) officials said they did not believe their jet was at fault when one of the company's DC-10 jetliners crashed near fog-shrouded Tripoli airport, killing at least 77 people.

But Libyan authorities denied the actions of the air traffic controllers who were working when the plane crashed Tuesday morning in an olive grove near the airport, 55 kilometres south of Tripoli.

There were conflicting reports on the number of people killed in the crash and also on the possible cause of the accident.

The official Libyan news agency said 78 people aboard the plane died, and Libyan officials insisted Friday that the plane had crashed.

Reporters were not admitted to the hospital but airline officials in Seoul said 40 of the injured who suffered only light burns were expected to be released Friday.

Distraught relatives frustrated at incomplete casualty reports

from the crash kicked and punched riot police blocking their way to Seoul's main airport where they planned a sit-in Friday.

Witnesses said about 100 weeping relatives marched peacefully for two hours from a designated KAL emergency centre to Kimpo international airport four kilometres away, but lashed out violently when police stopped them entering airport grounds.

KAL officials said a 14-member medical team with supplies left Seoul Friday for Tripoli and would return to Seoul with survivors.

Also with the team KAL Chairman Cho Choong-Hoon, seven KAL investigators, three government investigators and five officials of construction companies whose workers were aboard the plane.

Libyan authorities opened an investigation into the crash, the second of a DC-10 in eight days.

A United Airlines DC-10 crashed July 19 in the midwestern U.S. state of Iowa, killing 111 people.

Estonia strike ends, but many questions unanswered

LIINN (Agencies) — Striking Soviet workers went back to their jobs at dawn Friday after Estonia's government agreed to form a committee to investigate their complaints of discrimination, the official news media reported.

Representatives of strikers at factories and businesses in the Estonian capital met late Thursday with Estonian President Rauli Ruttel who agreed to join the commission, said Harry Do, a correspondent for Estonian radio. The ethnic Russian workers have complained that the public's Estonian majority is trying to deny them voting rights, Do, a correspondent for Estonian radio. The ethnic Russian workers have complained that the public's Estonian majority is trying to deny them voting rights. There were conflicting reports on whether the strike had ended.

Miners' leaders in the huge industrial region of the eastern Ukraine, the largest coal-producing area in the Soviet Union, said they did not regard the strike as

over, but merely suspended while the agreement was applied.

"We know full well we cannot break the system all at once," said Vladimir Gorelov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet's finance and budget commission, put the cost of the settlement at between three and 5.5 billion rubles (\$4.8 to \$8.3 billion).

Gorelov said pent-up frustrations over miners' living and working conditions, safety procedures and local shortages of food and basic consumer goods finally boiled over last week at the mine causing the 5,000-strong workforce to walk out.

In Moscow, meanwhile, the country's national legislature Thursday gave the three Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania their biggest victory yet in a struggle for political and economic autonomy.

The Supreme Soviet approved the first of three necessary readings of two resolutions that would give the republics economic independence by Jan. 1 and free them to trade with other Soviet republics.

These included huge increases in supplies of food and goods to mining areas, injections of funds to improve living and working conditions and pledges of greater local autonomy.

But with the whole country on the brink of economic collapse, with growth falling well below planned targets, wages racing ahead of production and huge

losses, the strike had

Yazov rekindles controversy

LONDON (R) — Soviet Defence Minister Dmitry Yazov renewed an arms control controversy with the United States Friday by warning that Moscow would resume producing a banned missile if the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's (NATO) short-range Lance rocket was upgraded.

Winding up a four-day visit to Britain, Yazov attacked U.S. plans to produce a new longer-range missile to replace the ageing Lance, saying this would violate the two countries' 1987 intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) treaty.

If the United States did manufacture it, he told London's Royal Institute of International Affairs, the Soviet Union would restart production of the SS-23, a missile of which it is currently destroying all stocks, as stipulated by the INF pact.

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Uno, disgraced by allegations that he paid a geisha for sex, announced Monday that he would quit to take responsibility for the LDP's worst electoral defeat last Sunday in which it lost its majority in the upper house.

Hashimoto has not yet made a formal announcement that he will be a candidate in the ballot Aug. 8 among the ruling party's 403 members of parliament for

Referring to the SS-23 by its Russian name Oka, Yazov said:

"If we eliminate this Oka, and then the Americans begin to build Lances with a range up to 500 kilometres, we will be forced to again make this Oka."

The INF treaty banned all U.S. and Soviet ground-launched nuclear missiles with a range of 500 to 5,500 kilometres.

Mohandas, a hardliner, claimed in a television interview that his security agencies had foiled plots by opposition groups "backed by global arrogance," the Iranian epithet for the United States and its allies, to disrupt the voting. But he did not elaborate.

There was no estimate of how

a new party president.

The LDP's leader becomes prime minister by virtue of the party's majority in the lower house.

An LDP elder took himself out of the running for prime minister, strengthening the chance that Hashimoto will reach the nation's highest office.

In an interview with the AP Hashimoto said little about his possible candidacy, but said the search for a party chief who will lead the nation had the upper house.

Speculation centred on Hashimoto, whose stature has been gaining fast in the conservative party in the past two

months, while Uno's leadership

was cut short by the scandal

over allegations he kept

mistresses.

On Friday, former Deputy

Prime Minister Shin Kanemaru, 75, who had been viewed

as a rival to Hashimoto, said he

had no intention of becoming prime minister.

Hashimoto's chances were

further bolstered when former

Finance Minister Kiichi Miyazawa,

who controls the

third largest faction in the par-

ty, also said he referred to have

a "young and progressive"

person head the party and the

Israelis abduct South Lebanese Shi'ite leader

BEIRUT (AP) — An Israeli commando force Friday kidnapped Sheikh Abdul Karim Obeid, Iran's closest ally in South Lebanon, who was reportedly involved in the abduction of American Lieutenant-Colonel William R. Higgins.

Police said Obeid, 33, a Shi'ite Muslim, was kidnapped from his second-floor apartment in the village of Jibchit, 18 kilometres north of the border with Israel.

Obeid is reputed to be the spiritual guide of Hezbollah (Party of God) in South Lebanon.

However, he has repeatedly denied any links with the pro-Iranian group which is affiliated with factions holding most of the 17 foreign hostages in Lebanon.

Security sources in South Lebanon, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Higgins was briefly held at Obeid's apartment after his abduction in South Lebanon Feb. 17, 1988.

One source said the late leader of the mainstream Shi'ite Amal militia in South Lebanon, Daoud Daoud, sent "a group of his followers to obtain Higgins' release from Obeid's apartment, but the force was encircled by Hezbollah gunmen, stripped of its weapons and sent back."

The source said Higgins' kidnappers, the Organisation of the Oppressed on Earth, later took the American marine out of Jibchit to another village in South Lebanon and then to the slums of South Beirut.

Daoud and Mahmoud Faqih, another Amal leader, were assassinated by unknown gunmen in South Beirut's seaside suburb of Ouzai Sept. 22, 1988. Amal blamed the killing on Hezbollah.

The two had led a four-day crackdown by Amal on Hezbollah in South Lebanon in April 1988.

Higgins, 44, headed an observer group attached to the United Nations peacekeeping force in Lebanon at the time of his kidnapping. He was kidnapped

near Daoud's base in the southern port of Tyre.

Obeid negotiated the safe withdrawal of Hezbollah gunmen and allied Iranian Revolutionary Guards from Jibchit, when the village of 18,000 residents was besieged by Amal after the kidnappers moved Higgins to another hideout.

Higgins' kidnapping was believed to be a major factor behind Amal's crackdown in the south, which left 62 dead and 150 wounded.

A police spokesman said an Israeli helicopter landed a commando force about three kilometre west of Jibchit at 1 a.m. (2000 GMT Thursday).

He said a force of about 12 commandos "walked into Jibchit, encircled Sheikh Obeid's three-storey building on the eastern edge of the village."

The spokesman said "someone with the Israelis spoke Arabic. They knocked on the door and someone from the Sheikh's family opened it."

The Israelis quickly moved in pointing silencer-equipped pistols at the Sheikh, his cousin Ahmad Obeid and Majid Fahs, a friend who was staying with them."

"Sheikh Obeid's 25-year-old wife, Mona, was locked in one of the rooms, her hands tied up and mouth plastered," the spokesman added.

As the Israeli force was leaving with the three men, a neighbour, Hussein Abu Zeid, "apparently heard some noise and opened his door to find out what was happening. They shot him in the head and he died instantly," the spokesman added.

He said the Israelis also "locked the room where Sheikh Obeid's three sons and two daughters were sleeping. They didn't hurt the children."

Abu Zeid's family informed the Amal militia, in charge of security in Jibchit, of the kidnapping, the spokesman said.



A Palestinian youth holds up stones as he stands on a main Arab Jerusalem street in front of burning tyres.

Chief rabbinate: Israel forbidden to withdraw

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel's chief rabbi issued a religious ruling saying that under Jewish law Israel is forbidden to withdraw from the occupied West Bank, or the body of Jewish religious teaching justifies a land compromise as a matter of saving lives.

The chief rabbi's ruling referred only to "Judea and Samaria," Israel's names for the West Bank, and did not mention the occupied Gaza Strip.

It was published a day after Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir made a first-thumping speech to a group of leading rabbis for retaining all occupied territories.

"It's possible to reach peace without heaven forbid, giving up a grain of the holy land of our forefathers," Shamir declared. "Peace is not a monopoly of the traitors, concession-makers and defeatists."

The chief rabbi said that prior to Israel's creation in 1948, some rabbis thought the country should not come into being because that way, bloodshed could be avoided and lives saved.

Rabbinate spokesman Eitan Aizman interpreted the ruling this way: "The chief rabbis are saying: it is a religious commandment to retain the land of Israel in our hands."

Israeli media reports said the ruling was issued in response to a statement by Israel's former chief rabbi Ovadiah Yosef, who told

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak last week that halacha, or the body of Jewish religious teaching, justifies a land compromise as a matter of saving lives.

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But already in 1948, it said, "the chief rabbi and most of the rabbis... ruled it was a Torah commandment to conquer the 'land of Israel' and hold on to it. We are also commanded to fight for it, and we should not abandon it because of Arab threats of bloodshed, since such is the way of the holy war."

The rabbi said it was "surprised and sorrowful" because Jews could tell a "non-Jewish ruler: we are obliged by law to 'Judea and Samaria' but you are prepared to kill Jews if we don't withdraw. Therefore, we have to withdraw."

Furthermore, it said, the claim of saving lives "obliges us not to retreat from the borders we hold today... withdrawal of the Israeli army may increase the danger of fatal attacks from the abandoned territory."

The chief rabbi is presided over by Israel's two chief rabbis, Mordechai Eliyahu representing Sephardi Jews from Middle Eastern countries and Avraham

Shapiro representing Ashkenazi Jews from Europe and America. Sephardi and Ashkenazi have separate religious traditions.

Both the chief rabbis are highly respected religious arbiters.

Asked whether the ruling was decisive, rabbinate spokesman Aizman said: "There is an argument about this in the country and it will continue."

Elazar Granot, a leader of the leftist Mapam Party, responded by demanding a governmental probe to determine whether the ruling "wasn't an explicit and serious deviation from the (rabbi's) authority and whether proper sanctions shouldn't be taken against this deviation."

Abraham Burg, a religious legislator from the Labour Party and the son of former Interior Minister Yosef Burg, charged that the rabbinate "became part of the political establishment and somehow lost its spiritual authority, becoming a pawn in the political game."

Rafsanjani, 'the shark,' cements hold on power

By Ed Blanche
The Associated Press

NICOSIA — Hashemi Rafsanjani, the overwhelming favourite to become the fourth president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, is known to his countrymen as "kuseh" the shark.

Some say this is because of his political ruthlessness and cunning, as well as business acumen that has made him a millionaire, that he masks behind a smile and a sly wit.

Others attribute it to his lack of facial hair, revealing his Mongolian ancestry, in a nation where beards are the badge of revolutionary manhood.

Rafsanjani's near-certain election is likely to cement the 55-year-old charismatic cleric's hold on power following the death of his mentor, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, June 3. His partnership with Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Khomeini's successor as religious leader and Rafsanjani's predecessor as president, is seen by many as signalling a new era in Iranian politics.

Both men advocate rebuilding bridges with the West, a move stymied in February when Khomeini decreed a death sentence on British author Salman Rushdie for allegedly blaspheming Islam in his novel, "The Satanic Verses" and plunged Iran into a new confrontation with the West.

Constitutional reforms due

for approval in a national referendum, being held at the same time as the election, give the presidency more powers than it has had since the 1979 revolution. Thus Rafsanjani will wield far greater influence than his predecessors.

Rafsanjani is a Hojatoleslam, or middle-ranking cleric, and has been a central figure in Khomeini's revolution. He was jailed for several years under the late Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi before he was toppled in 1979.

He is reported to have survived several assassination attempts since then and to have crushed his rivals with brutal efficiency.

Like many Iranian leaders, who have seen their peers killed in the revolution's political maelstrom, Rafsanjani moves around Tehran in an armoured limousine and is constantly surrounded by bodyguards.

He dominated the Majlis, Iran's parliament, after it was formed in 1980 and built up strong support among the 350,000-strong Revolutionary Guards Corps, which he briefly commanded, and Iran's critical power centres.

Rafsanjani was close to Khomeini throughout the revolution, as his representative on the nine-man Supreme Defence Council, which determined military strategy.

In June last year, Khomeini gave him control of military affairs, charging him with the

task of reversing Iran's defeats in the war and welding its dispirited and fractious forces into an effective fighting machine.

Ever tuned to the popular mood, diplomats said Rafsanjani had for some time perceived a growing war weariness among Iran's 50 million people and believed that continuing the conflict was futile.

Khomeini's obsessive hostility towards Iraqi President Saddam Hussein made peace impossible.

But when Rafsanjani just how bad a shape the military was in, he was able to finally convince Khomeini to accept to United Nations-sponsored ceasefire in July 1988. It took effect in mid-month.

"Rafsanjani, a conservative in social and economic policy, is a radical when it comes to the issue of exercising power by revolutionary institutions," Iranian exile Amin Taheri, former editor of Tehran's mass-circulation Kayhan daily, wrote in a recent book.

He said Rafsanjani was "a master of intrigue and a capable tactician" who was spotted as a future strongman by Western intelligence agencies as early as 1983.

To many Western leaders, Rafsanjani represents the more acceptable face of the Islamic revolution because he believes Iran cannot carry out the mammoth task of post-war reconstruction without help and that

most Iranians are weary of being pawns to much of the world.

If the Americans have viewed Rafsanjani as a "moderate," a term that was little real meaning in the Byzantine labyrinth of Iranian politics, his track record shows him to be firmly committed to the revolution and its spread.

But, displaying the political agility he has used to survive Iran's often bloody in-fighting, he emerged on top.

Rafsanjani often delivers the sermon at the Friday prayer sessions at Tehran University.

Clutching the barrel of an automatic rifle, his white turban tilted roughly back on his head, he speaks for hours without notes. Unlike other speakers, he peppers his sermons with jokes.

He was born Aug. 25, 1934, in the village of Behraman in Rafsanjani province, on the edge of Iran's central desert. His father was a pistachio farmer of moderate means.

He was educated at the theological seminary in the holy

city of Qom, where he first came to the attention of one of his instructors, Khomeini.

He joined Khomeini's opposition to the monarchy and helped organise anti-Shah riots in 1963. He was imprisoned several times after Khomeini was exiled to Iraq and claimed he was tortured.

Rafsanjani helped mould the network of mullahs that became Khomeini's revolutionary underground. He went to Lebanon in 1975 to liaise with other opposition groups.

He would later turn on them, as he did with Bani-Sadr, after the revolution was won and the mullahs began to systematically eliminate leftists, liberal and nationalists.

Rafsanjani was shot in the mouth. He first was treated in Vienna and flown this week to hospital.

The Anadolu Agency reported that Rafsanjani was in a stable condition.

Tehran Radio said he was still recovering at a hospital, but that he is now able to talk.

It quoted him as saying Qassemouli "had realised after 10 years of opposing the Islamic republic that negotiating with Iran was in his best interest."

"It was third meeting, at which we were to pose some questions and Qassemouli was to answer them. It was about 7:10 p.m., and close to the end of the meeting," Sahraroodi said.

"The flat was very small, and I was sitting directly in front of the door. Suddenly an assailant burst the door open, and in a split second he shot me in the mouth. As I was falling to the ground, I was shot again twice in the arm."

"I hit the floor, my head hit a sofa," he said.

"I remember only that I was bleeding severely from the mouth and the neck. It took me 20 or 25 minutes to recover. I struggled to the street downstairs, where I was helped by passersby and taken to hospital," he said.

The Austrian police has issued an arrest warrant for two Iranians. One of them has been identified as Amir Mansour Bozorgian, a member of the Iranian negotiating team. The other has not been identified. Tehran has protested the action.

The Kurds are an ethnic minority of some 28 million living in Turkey, Iran and Iraq and in small enclaves of about 500,000 each in Syria and the Soviet Union.

Irqi, Iranian and Turkish Kurds are seeking autonomy from the central governments.

Mauritania accuses Senegal of war moves

NOUAKCHOTT (Agencies) — Mauritania has accused neighbouring Senegal of preparing for war and of sending armed men across the border to attack civilians.

"Certain events lead us to the conclusion that Senegal is preparing to wage war against Mauritania," the Information Ministry said in a statement in Nouakchott Thursday.

In April a minor dispute over grazing rights on the border between the West African state erupted into ethnic violence, leaving hundreds dead and creating thousands of refugees.

Senegalese officials say incursions into Mauritania are by refugees trying to recover livestock and possessions which they were prevented from taking with them.

The Mauritanian statement said Senegal was preparing international opinion for an attack, referring to remarks by Senegalese President Abdou Diouf on French radio earlier this month.

Diouf reasserted Senegal's claim to the fertile north bank of the Senegal River which separates the countries. The land is vital in a region which is fast disappearing under the encroaching Saharan Desert.

The Nouakchott statement said Senegalese soldiers had been coming into Mauritanian territory north of the river "to kill peaceful citizens."

All but 30,000 refugees had now left temporary camps, he said.

Many of those remaining were Senegalese who had been migrated for Mauritanians and singled out for attack because of their light skin, names or way of life, he said.

Mauritania appealed for help in resettlement at a meeting of aid donors under the auspices of the World Bank. These donors — including leading industrial nations, Arab funds and the World Bank — agreed in principle to provide up to \$200 million for public investments.

Iranian diplomat

describes Vienna attack

NICOSIA (AP) — An Iranian diplomat wounded in the shooting of Kurdish rebel leader Abdul Rahman Qassemlou in Vienna two weeks ago gave his first account of the incident Thursday saying only one assailant was involved, Tehran Radio said.

The broadcast, monitored in Nicosia, quoted Mohammad Jaafari Sahraroodi as saying Qassemlou, leader of the outlawed Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) of Iran, was to answer certain questions put forth by the Iranian government during the July 13 meeting.

He claimed that Qassemlou, 59, had requested permission to return to Iran and an amnesty for some Iranian Kurds.

KDP officials have admitted that Qassemlou had been negotiating with Tehran, holding two sessions with Iranian diplomats in December and January.

They charted Tehran had set Qassemlou's death trap. Iraq and Iran's main opposition group, Mujahedeen-e-Khalq, also have helped assassinate Qassemlou.

Tehran has blamed Iraq. It said Iraqi agents killed Qassemlou to block a rapprochement between Tehran and Iranian Kurds, traditionally backed by Iraq.

One of two aides killed with Qassemlou was Fadihi Rassoul, an Iraqi Kurd with Austrian citizenship. Sahraroodi described Rassoul as a "Muslim intellectual and a friend of the Islamic republic."

Sahraroodi was shot in the mouth. He first was treated in Vienna and flown this week to hospital.

Environment strategy conference starts today

AMMAN (J.T.) — Under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor Al Hussein, the national environment strategy project will start its two-day conference at the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC) in Amman Saturday.

Eight specialised committees have been set up from both the private and public sectors to take part in preparing strategies for the conservation of the environment in Jordan.

The eight committees were formed following the approval of the Prime Minister in view of the agreement that was signed on Sept. 19, 1988, between the Ministry of Rural and Municipal Affairs and the Environment and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN).

A higher guiding committee was formed to be entrusted with drawing up environmental strategies and following up on the national environmental strategy.

The committee held its first meeting on April 4, 1989, presided over by the minister of rural and municipal affairs, and the environment during which it was decided that all relevant institutions in both the private and public sectors must take part in preparing the strategy.

The project was launched following six months of intensive studies in which the USAID contributed the sum of \$868,000 with the Jordanian government contributing JD 68,000.

Discussions of the meeting will deal with: Antiquities and cultural resources; atmosphere and air quality; coastal and marine issues; energy and minerals; population and settlements; surface and ground water; wildlife and habitat, as well as agriculture.

Attending the opening of the meeting will be Minister of Rural and Municipal Affairs and the Environment Yousef Hamdan Al Jabi, Mr. Awad Al Tal, undersecretary of the ministry, and Dr. Sufian Al Tal, director of the Department of Environment.

Opening speeches will be delivered by the minister and by Dr. Tal.

Queen Noor is the honorary president of the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature.

On Oct. 6, 1988, Queen Noor was the distinguished guest at the celebration of the IUCN's 40th anniversary in Paris. She delivered a speech and was awarded the title of "Patron of IUCN" for her distinguished efforts in the conservation of the world's natural resources.



Minister of Culture and Information Nasouh Al Majali Thursday presents a diploma to one of the graduates at Hittin Community College.

Majali stresses importance of citizens in development

AMMAN (Petra) — Information and Culture Minister Nasouh Al Majali Thursday said that the Jordanian citizens lie at the heart of the development and building process of the country, and that the national education policy has been based on this concept.

Addressing the fourth batch of graduates from Hittin Community College at a special ceremony held at the college Thursday, Majali said that Jordan is the offspring of the Great Arab Revolt, which sought Arab unity and independence.

"It is from this pan-Arab approach that the unity of the Arab people on both sides of the River Jordan was achieved in 1950."

Majali called on the graduates to work towards developing their

country and people and employing their knowledge and skills in the best interest of their country.

He called on them to be optimistic about the future, to preserve their original heritage and traditions, to rally behind their country's leadership, and to work for achieving its objectives.

The college dean, Mohammad Suwwan, congratulated the graduates and called on them to be faithful and dedicated soldiers of their country and stressed the importance of their interaction with the local community.

At the end of the celebration,

Majali presented the 412 graduates with their diplomas also presenting special awards to those who excelled in their studies.

GUVS to build Madaba rehabilitation centre

MADABA (Petra) — The General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS) will build a rehabilitation centre for handicapped people in Madaba at the cost of JD 50,000 and a tender has been already awarded to a local construction firm to carry out the project, according to Madaba District Governor Khalil Khreisat.

Khreisat said that the projected centre will have six rooms and workshops for the rehabilitation

of handicapped children from all areas around Madaba.

GUVS will finance the training programmes for the handicapped children in cooperation with the local Saladdin Charitable Society which has provided a 10-dunum plot of land for the centre, Khreisat noted.

He said that GUVS will also purchase and install all equipment and other facilities for the training programmes.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

* A plastic arts exhibition by the Student Affairs Department's Painting Club of the Yarmouk University at the Housing Bank Art Gallery.

* An exhibition of photographs depicting various aspects of life in the Jordanian batin, at the Yarmouk University.

BAZAAR

* The annual bazaar of the Hittin Social Development Centre which includes handicrafts such as embroidery, artificial flowers, dresses, kiltwear, ornaments and children's toys.

THEATRE

* An Arabic play entitled "Thamani Thill" (Price of a Shadow) at the Royal Cultural Centre — 8:00 p.m.

LECTURE

* A lecture, in Arabic, entitled "Prospects of building the Palestinian Economy" by Dr. Fuad Bseiso at Abdil Hamid Shoman Foundation — 6:30 p.m.



Her Majesty Queen Noor and Minister of Youth Awad Khleifat are seen Thursday with the participants in the second national gathering

for Jordanian women working and studying abroad at Al Nadwa Palace (Photo by Yousef Al 'Allan)

Queen Noor highlights women's role in serving national interests abroad

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Thursday received at Al Nadwa Palace the participants in the second national gathering for Jordanian women working and studying abroad, and called on them to pursue their dedicated efforts towards serving their country, thus acting as Jordan's best ambassadors abroad.

The meeting was attended by Youth Minister Awad Khleifat and the Ministry's secretary general.

Queen Noor met with the participants from 11 countries and asked about their impressions concerning the gathering.

The Queen inquired about their studies and living conditions and stressed the need for more similar gatherings, so as to strengthen the students' sense of belonging to their homeland.

His Majesty King Hussein then made a surprise appearance when he came and welcomed the Queen's guests.

The second national gathering, organised by the Youth Ministry for 60 Jordanian girls, working or studying abroad, concluded here Thursday.

Addressing the gathering at a special ceremony held at Al Husseini Youth City, Khleifat highlighted the importance of such gatherings, saying that they are aimed at enhancing the ties of friendship and cooperation between female Jordanian youth inside and outside the country, and giving the Jordanian girls working and studying abroad the opportunity to get first hand information about the cultural and scientific developments of their country as well as to visit the archaeological sites.

Khleifat said that the idea of holding such gatherings is a true translation of the ministry's concern for providing comprehensive and balanced care for all Jordanian youths.

The minister stressed that the gathering has achieved its objectives and has provided an opportunity to a meaningful dialogue between participants and decision makers on a number of social, educational, national and pan-Arab issues.

Khleifat pointed out that the relation between the ministry and the Jordanian youth abroad does not end by the end of the gathering, but will continue through continuous contacts.

At the end of the gathering, the minister presented participants with certificates of appreciation.

On Saturday a total of 100 youths will start their week-long annual event at Ajloun permanent youth camp.

The camp, the third of its kind for Jordanian male youths, is also organised by the Ministry of Youth for Jordanian youths working or studying abroad to strengthen ties between the youth and their country.

During the week-long event, the youth will listen to lectures on political, intellectual, cultural and developmental affairs and will hold dialogue with senior Jordanian officials and decision-makers on various issues.

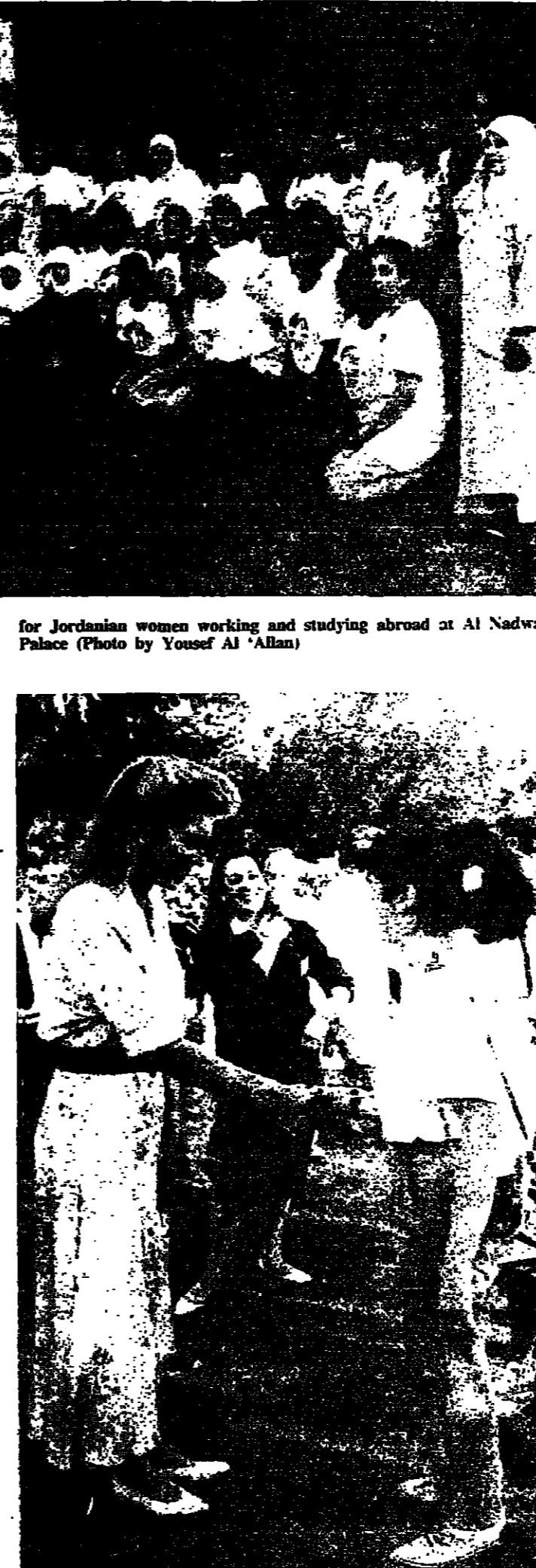
Society to promote exports, local goods

AMMAN (Petra) — The National Society for the Protection of Consumers constituent assembly held its first meeting Thursday and elected a sub-committee responsible for reformulating the Society's objectives and purposes.

Addressing the gathering, Health and Social Development Minister Zuhair Malhas said that the formation of the Society was triggered by the current economic conditions in Jordan and unjustifiable price hikes.

Malhas said that the Society aims to enhance confidence between consumers and producers and to direct consumers to locally-produced items of quality similar to imported items and to encourage national exports.

The society, to supply consumers with information on the quality of commodities, their nutritional values, advantages and disadvantages of such items and



Her Majesty Queen Noor Thursday welcomes one of the participants of the gathering during a reception at Al Nadwa Palace (Photo by Yousef Al 'Allan)



Health and Social Development Minister Zuhair Malhas Thursday chairs the constituent assembly meeting of the National Society for the Protection of Consumers in Amman (Petra photo)

information on their prices. It will also recommend to the appropriate authorities that legislation to protect consumers from fraud and price manipulations be enacted.

Seminar urges improvement in wastewater treatment

AMMAN (Petra) — A five-day symposium on the use of wastewater after treatment concluded Thursday with a call for the enactment of new laws regulating the treatment of wastewater and re-using it in the Eastern Mediterranean region.

The symposium recommended that appropriate health control measures be adopted during the

planning stage for re-using treated water in light of the instructions issued by the World Health Organisation (WHO). Participants called for holding national symposia with a view to promoting the specifications set by WHO to monitor the wastewater treatment process.

They also called on WHO and the Regional Centre for Environmental Health Activities (CEHA) to take the lead in disseminating information on the hazards posed by the incorrect use of treated water in irrigation.

They praised the water treatment and purification plant at Khrbet Al Samra for its observance of the instructions issued by WHO.

The symposium was organised by the Health Ministry, in cooperation with WHO, to discuss the

various experiences in the field of wastewater treatment in the East Mediterranean region.

The symposium was attended by representatives of 11 Arab countries: Jordan, Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Morocco, Yemen, Arab Republic, South Yemen, Sudan, Syria, and Tunisia, as well as observers from various institutions in Jordan.

Women and described it as the first step on the way to achieving independent decisions.

The workshop is aimed at

training women leaders on how to create and spread awareness on the women's sector and try to use them in the forthcoming elections, coordinating women's election campaigns throughout the country.

Sharaf pointed out that the right for

Premier voices support for cultural sector

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Sharif Zaid Ibn Shaker Friday stressed the government's support for the cultural sector in Jordan and voiced his interest in providing the appropriate climate to enable it to further prosper and flourish and to enhance the cultural and artistic ties.

At a meeting with a delegation representing the Jordanian theatre, plastic artists and musicians, Sharif Zaid called on the mass media to play an effective role in supporting the local cultural movement and to encourage all forms of innovative cultural and art work.

Sharif Zaid also voiced support for the creation of a qualitative organisation which will be entrusted with organising the cultural and artistic sector and providing the legal framework for it.



Sharif Zaid Ibn Shaker

The presidents of the associations briefed Sharif Zaid on their contribution towards developing the cultural movement in the country, saying that they played a role in highlighting the national and cultural identity through the various arts works, which reflected Jordan's image at the pan-Arab level.

The meeting was attended by Minister of Information and Culture Nasouh Al Majali.

Bank to sell foreign currency to students

AMMAN (Petra) — The Housing Bank Saturday starts selling foreign currency to Jordanian students studying abroad to help them cover their study fees and living costs, a spokesman for the bank said Friday.

The source explained that in order for students to qualify for this service they must present an official letter from the university or educational institute stating that they are a regular student.

This letter should be certified by the Ministry of Higher Education or by the Jordanian cultural attaché at the country where the individual is studying.

The students should also support the university's letter with another document or letter from the Higher Education Ministry, stating that they are studying at their own expense.

The bank fixed the amount of foreign currency any student can get monthly at \$200 for those studying in the Soviet Union or in East European countries, \$300 for those attending universities in the Arab World, Pakistan, India and Philippines, and \$500 for those attending universities in the United States or Western Europe.

Jordan to mark decade of culture

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Information and Culture Nasouh Al Majali Thursday stressed the importance of developing cultural work through national effort involving many parties.

Addressing the second meeting of the Jordanian national committee in charge of preparations for the International Decade for Cultural Development, Majali highlighted the importance of the Arabic language and called for its simplification with a view to its becoming the language of simple cultural communication.

Majali, who chaired the meeting, noted the important role the Academy of Arabic Language can play in this field.

He stressed the need for drawing up a plan of action designed to upgrade handicrafts through

the undertaking of a serious study to develop and promote traditional handicrafts.

The minister called for the collecting of the heritage, study of it, and an effort to define the types of heritage and the bodies to collect it.

The committee discussed its priorities, appropriate work formulas, and expansion of the representation base to include broader sectors.

The committee also discussed a working paper prepared by the Information Ministry on means of developing and upgrading the cultural sector.

The meeting was attended by Ministry of Culture Secretary General Hani Al Amad and held at the Royal Cultural Centre.

NATIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

CZECH MINISTER: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Marwan Al Oasem Thursday received Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Under Secretary Jaromir Nlicheira and reviewed with him bilaterally relations. Earlier, the ministry's secretary general, Mu'tasim Bilbesi, reviewed with the Czech guest means of developing bilateral cooperation in the economic and commercial fields and discussed the latest developments in the region, and particularly the Palestine question. Bilbesi voiced Jordan's appreciation of Czechoslovakia's support of Arab rights and for the Palestinian people's legitimate rights on their national soil.

ACC TRADE, ECONOMIC MINISTERS HOLD TALKS: Trade and economy ministers from the four-nation Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) met in Baghdad Thursday for talks on policy coordination, the official Iraqi News Agency (INA) said. The ACC established in February by Iraq, Egypt, North Yemen and Jordan, aims to achieve economic integration to pave the way for an eventual Arab common market. Leaders of the four countries agreed last month to abolish visa requirements and promote free movement of workers. But Iraqis still need permission to leave the country (Reuter)

ZAWAIDEH RECEIVES SUDANESE ENVOY: Minister of Public Works and Housing Shafiq Zawaideh Thursday discussed with the Sudanese ambassador to Jordan scopes of cooperation particularly in the field of housing and construction. (Petra)

IMF TEAM VISIT JPC: The deputy director general of the Jordan Ports Corporation (JPC) Thursday met with a delegation representing the International Monetary Fund currently on a visit to Jordan. The talks dealt with the JPC role in bolstering Jordan's economy. The delegation also visited Aqaba Customs Department and was briefed on its activities. (Petra)

U.S. STUDENTS VISIT JPC: A U.S. student delegation has visited the Jordan Ports Corporation (JPC) and was briefed on its establishment as well as its role in linking Jordan with the world to boost Jordan's national economy. (Petra)

SALT CENTRE EMPLOYEES LEAVE FOR ITALY: Five employees of the Salt Handicraft Training Centre have left for Italy to participate in an advanced training course in pottery and knitting. During the eight-month course, they will participate in practical and technical training courses and visit museums and exhibitions specialised in handicraft. This course is intended to prepare local cadres in the field of pottery and knitting capable of training students enrolled in the centre. (I.T.)

ACC CULTURE, INFORMATION MINISTERS TO MEET: The Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) ministers of culture and information will hold their first meeting on Aug. 11 in Baghdad. The two-day meetings will be devoted to setting a new cultural and information strategy among the ACC member countries. Iraqi Culture and Information Minister Nasayif Jasem said.

الجامعة

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Inflation and interest rates

THERE is unanimity here and abroad that stabilising the Jordanian currency is a sine qua non for revitalising the country's national economy. There is also consensus within and outside the country that the Jordanian dinar is undervalued. Sandwiched between these two propositions is the wide agreement that inflation in Jordan is double-digit by all conservative estimates. Yet the interest rate still payable on Jordanian currency accounts is wantonly repugnant to all the foregoing well-established premises.

All over the world, the first thing that official financial circles do to combat high inflation and rapid devaluation of national currencies is to hike up interest rate on their respective national deposits. In Jordan, for reasons still undetermined, interest rate offered by national banks on Jordanian deposits is recklessly below the ongoing rate of inflation. The end result has been the continuation of the double-digit inflationary rates and the nose dive of the exchange rate applicable to the Jordanian dinar versus the principal hard currencies of the world. This is not to mention the fact that Jordanian depositors are earning below zero returns on their accounts.

In short what the dinar and the Kingdom need now is the application of a realistic interest rate that offers the Jordanian depositor some value over and above the inflationary rate. The Central Bank of Jordan is the very official fiscal agency which should prescribe this realistic interest rate. The other banks in the country would be forced to follow suit or risk losing their deposits. The cumulative effect of such measures would be the urgently wanted prescription to the end the artificially low exchange rate of the dinar and at the same time stem the dangerous inflationary rate that has hit the country of late.

Clearly such proposed ideas cannot on their own solve the economic and fiscal woes of the country. The Central Bank of Jordan has already embarked on the application of many potent policies to reverse the tide in the Jordanian economy and to adjust the country's fiscal course, the net result of which the country is impatiently waiting for. Nevertheless the adoption of a realistic interest rate payable on Jordanian accounts is an indispensable feature of the entire programme to ameliorate the economic and fiscal conditions in the country. The sooner Jordan and Jordanians shift to this pragmatic course the better it would be for the whole Kingdom.

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i Arabic daily commented on Israel's request to France to support the Shamir elections plan in the occupied Arab lands. The paper said that the request represents a new Israeli move in the European arena to obtain support for Shamir and his manoeuvres following Israel's failure to secure this support a few weeks ago from the European Community countries. The community's declaration issued in Madrid was a clear support by Europe for the international conference which is opposed by Israel and which is an essential element for peace in the Middle East, said the paper. The move comes in the wake of that declaration in which the European leaders expressed deep concern over the loss of innocent life in the Arab lands as a result of Israel's atrocities and repression, the paper added. Therefore, the paper said, the new Israeli move is a new bid to foil the Madrid declaration and an attempt to impose Israel's propaganda on European nations. But, said the paper, such moves can never deceive the French government and people; and Paris will sooner or later renew its commitment to the Madrid declaration which calls for a total peace in our region.

A columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily expresses fear that the Lebanese arena is gradually becoming substitute for the Iraq-Iran conflict which ended in the Gulf a year ago. Mahmoud Al Rimawi launches a strong attack on Iran which, he says, is imposing its influence on the warring factions, continually disrupting the mediation efforts of the Arab League committee and trying by all means to keep the war simmering for the purpose of achieving its regional objectives. The writer commends the various Arab mediation committees for their sincere efforts to end the crisis in Lebanon and refers to decisions by the leaders of Algeria and Saudi Arabia in postponing their visits abroad as clear indication of their involvement in endeavours to bring peace to Lebanon. He says that Iran which continues to display its hatred to the Arabs and hostile attitude to Iraq and the Gulf states is now trying to undermine all the peace efforts in Lebanon by providing weapons to its surrogates there under the pretext of preparing the ground for an Islamic republic, Iranian style. The writers says that the Iranians who lost the war in the Gulf are now trying to carry it to Lebanon at the expense of the tortured Lebanese people.

Sawt Al Sheab daily commented on the situation in Lebanon and said that the current indiscriminate shelling is harvesting thousands of innocent lives. The paper said that the blood bath in Lebanon is not only caused by the Lebanese warring factions themselves but is being fuelled by outside forces which want to see the Arab country destroyed. The Arab League committee which is trying to find a way to end the crisis, can and should expose these forces behind the present escalation in the fighting, and must announce the facts about the situation in Beirut, the paper added. It said that the Arab League committee should even be given the power to impose peace by force on all the parties lest the danger can spread to the other parts of the Arab World with detrimental consequences to Arab society.

Cools kidnap — heating up an old wound?

By P.V. Vivekanand

THE MYSTERIOUS kidnapping in May of a long-term British resident of Beirut and the demands issued by a hitherto unknown group which claimed responsibility for the abduction have reopened one of the sorest spots in the history of the Palestinian liberation struggle — the assassination of one of the best-known and popular artists in the Arab World. At the same time, it also threw some light into the constant workings of the Israeli secret service machinery which spare no opportunity to undermine the credibility of the Palestinian struggle and its leaders.

The "Cells of Arab Struggle," which claimed the abduction of Peter Cools in west Beirut, has demanded the release of "Palestinian prisoners" held in Britain in connection with the July 1987 killing of Palestinian satire artist Naji Al Ali Al Adhami; but Scotland Yard insists that it has no such prisoners. For whatever it is worth, the Yard has been reported as saying, all it has to remotely account for in the case someone who appears to be an agent for the infamous Israeli secret service, Mossad, who had penetrated Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) ranks in Britain and who is currently serving a long sentence for possession of explosives, arms and ammunition, allegedly intended for "Palestinian sabotage operations." It is a mystery how the case of the "double-agent" was mentioned in the Adhami affair since once could detect little, if any, link between the two. Obviously, there is more to it than meets the eye and no-one wants to part with information. However, as far as it appears, no-one directs linked to the Adhami killing is held in any British prison.

There has been no publicised report on the Cools' abduction since the kidnappers issued their demands, except that his wife was quoted as saying in the second week of July that he remained missing. If there are any clandestine "negotiations" over the hostage, then we are not privy to them.

But, the questions that still hang in the air are: Are the alleged kidnappers genuinely seeking the release of the double-agent in Britain, "Sowan," or of someone else whom Scotland Yard has been keeping under wraps? What could possibly be the identity of the group?

If it is Palestinian, it is unlikely that the group is seeking the release of "Sowan," unless of course its aim is to extract revenge from the Israeli agent for whatever he did to PLO ranks in Britain or, remotely still, to gain information on the Adhami killing. There is also the possibility that "Sowan" was involved in some other shadowy operation of which we know nothing about and which could have triggered a personal vendetta against him or a even far-fetched rescue attempt.

For all we know, Cools was not exactly "kidnapped" for political purposes; one needs no reminder that there are hundreds of militia-held prisoners in Lebanon with very little political purpose being served by their continued detention. It is not inconceivable that Cools somehow got entangled with some private feud and hence was abducted.

But, we are left with the strong possibility that the so-called "Cells of Arab Struggle" is a product of Mossad imagination. However, we can discount a scenario where Mossad would stage such a stunt with the aim of securing the release of Sowan, simply because there is no possibility that Britain would release the convict; particularly in the aura of publicity that surrounded the Cools kidnapping. That leaves us with a situation where the alleged kidnapper group was simply trying to remind the world of the "terrorist" nature of the Palestinian people by reopening the Adhami murder and resurrecting an accusing finger at the Palestinian leadership.

First suspects

However, somewhere along the line, there is a slight hitch.

When the cartoonist was gunned down in London in July 1987, the immediate suspects that entered the picture were some leaders of the mainstream Palestinian movement. Charges and counter-charges started flying around, prompting the PLO leadership and some independent members of the Palestine National Council (PNC) to launch an internal probe into the killing. Simply, the aim of the probe was to ascertain whether any PLO leader who had had the misfortune to have come under the hard-hitting pen of Adhami had any links with the murder.

The eight-month inquiry, conducted by a special Palestinian panel made up of representatives of all mainstream Palestinian factions as well as independent PNC members, concluded in early 1988 that it could not come up with any evidence of PLO involvement in the murder, according to reliable sources. The inquiry was conducted with the utmost sincerity and seriousness, particularly that some of the panel's members were close friends of Naji (Adhami) and respected him for his nationalist views, according to one source.

It was no secret that Adhami had acquired the hostility of some Arab as well as PLO leaders, including Yasser Arafat, as a result of direct, unreserved attacks on what the artist saw as "insincere" Arab feelings towards the Palestinian struggle and "betrayal of the cause" by some Palestinian leaders. Another target of the cartoonist was the "burgundy lifestyle" of some PLO leaders. He did not spare the Iranians either; he ridiculed their Islamic revolution and its leaders.

The findings of the Palestinian inquiry indicated that "external hands" were behind the murder, according to the sources. "It could have been Iranian or Arab, but in all probability it was Mossad," said one of the sources. "However, there was no absolute proof to support such a clear-cut final conclusion."

But, despite everything, there was always a feeling among Palestinian circles that they were "missing something" in the whole episode.

In addition to Arafat several others in the top echelon of the PLO also had made no secret of their dislike for Adhami and his illustrations of what he charged were the PLO leadership's deviations from the central course towards the goal of an independent Palestinian state. His works, some of the most popular among Arab nationalists, clearly said he had seen some of the PLO leaders "abandoning the Palestinian cause" and flirting with "imperialist-Zionist schemes." Another constant theme in his works was the living styles of some PLO leaders whom he portrayed as corrupt and luxury-loving with little care for the suffering of the Palestinians living in squall refugee camps.

"If the aim of the people behind the murder was to create disarray among the PLO ranks by indirectly pointing the finger at the PLO leaders, then they did succeed, though to a limited extent," according to a senior Palestinian leader. "Disarray and mutual suspicion were aroused, but the PLO leaders did not allow the situation to get out of hand and the inquiry helped very much to clear the air."

Individual action

According to independent sources, many in the PLO believed that some of Arafat's close aides could have had a hand in the assassination without the knowledge of the chairman.

Fatah was known to be the most loose-knit PLO faction despite its numerical and commando strength. Many Fatah members have resorted to individual actions without top-level approval. Obviously, the inference in the charges against Fatah was that one or more of its leaders or juniors could have decided to "do away with a cartoonist who was not exactly in the good books of the leadership," said a source.

According to a North African source, the assassination also created ripples in a secret dialogue between Fatah leaders and the

notorious Abu Nidal, whose extremist breakaway group has been blamed for dozens of reported and unreported attacks in Europe and the Middle East. The source said the Libyan-sponsored dialogue, which started immediately after a PNC meeting in Algiers in 1987 when Abu Nidal made a vain attempt to rejoin the PLO, was aimed at seeking some means of "legitimising" the group some of whose members are wanted in several European and Middle Eastern countries on charges of murder and sabotage. The dialogue was based on an understanding that Abu Nidal was "suspending" all violent attacks "outside Palestine." This dialogue also afforded the group to rebuild a strong presence in Palestinian camps in South Lebanon where Fatah presence have always been very strong.

According to the source, the dialogue was "frozen" for some time immediately after the attack on Adhami since Abu Nidal and some Fatah leaders accused each of other of being behind it. "Abu Nidal maintained his innocence by pointing out that he shared and supported the views of Adhami and stood to a lose of stomach Palestinian nationalist," said the source. "He levelled a counter-charge against the PLO leadership."

"One of the first wreaths to arrive at Adhami's funeral was from Abu Nidal," the source said. "Abu Nidal also sent a personal message of condolences to the Al Adhami family." The Fatah-Abu Nidal dialogue, conducted personally by PLO deputy military commander Khalil Al Wazir, who was assassinated in Tunis last year by agents believed to be Israelis, resumed after both parties "assured each other of their innocence in the Adhami murder," the source added. (The status of the dialogue is not known today, but it is a safe assumption that it cooled off after the PLO leadership adopted a moderate approach to peace efforts in November 1988.)

Mossad connection

The whole episode of the Adhami murder took a turn in November 1987 when it was reported that Scotland Yard had "stumbled" onto a Mossad agent who had penetrated the PLO apparatus in London and this agent had first claimed to know the killer of Adhami. According to the reports, the agent was identified as "Bashar Samara," but he was never charged with any crime in Britain. He was "expelled" to Israel for "his own safety" because of his record as an undercover agent for Mossad, according to the reports.

It was at this point, it appears, that lingering doubts of many Palestinians were put to rest since something like the Adhami murder was right up Mossad's alley. For many, it was enough to know that Mossad was somehow involved in the affair. By conjecture, for the Israeli secret service, the assassination could have served at least two purposes; the first, getting rid of a Palestinian who could whip up nationalist emotions among thousands with a stroke of his pen, and the second, placing a smoking gun right at the PLO leadership's door. And then the Sowan arrest hit the press, leaving the PLO red-faced because of its apparent security negligence in London, and perhaps elsewhere in Europe, in allowing its ranks to be infiltrated by Israeli agents. But, it was also a blessing in disguise for the PLO leadership since its pleas of innocence in the Adhami murder were fulfilled with the emergence of Mossad onto the scene.

The question remains: What purpose could be served with the Cools "kidnap" or the related/unrelated demands issued by his "abductors" at this point in time? Coming as it does amid intensified Palestinian peace moves and conflicting Israeli signals, the only explanation to the affair appears to lie somewhere along the line that it is another of those staged dramas where the Israelis — or any other interested party — could add some more colour and cast old/new doubts over the PLO's distance from "terrorism" and its quest for peace.

Reason versus despair

By Abba Eban

NEW YORK — The only thread that now separates the Israeli-Palestinian area from early explosion is the fact that the United States is in simultaneous discourse with all the parties. Ending the American-Palestinian dialogue now would lead to despair of peace, escalation of violence and growth of extremism on both sides of the conflict.

It would be injurious to Israeli interests for the United States to withdraw its restraining presence from this arena. It is gratifying to know that this is a general view in official Washington and that it is shared by many Israelis and by some important Jewish organisations. Talking to a Palestinian political organisation does not imply an

acknowledgement of virtue or a certificate of approval. The modicum of functional view is that diplomatic contacts, in Winston Churchill's phrase, "are not a grace to be conferred but a convenience to be used."

It is unrealistic to assume that Israel can appoint its own negotiating team and also appoint the team of its adversaries. This notion has no precedent in international history. It assumes that there are Palestinians with attributes of leadership who could be induced to emerge from anonymity, defy the Arab consensus and form a separate delegation totally independent of the PLO. The search for such partners has not had a single success.

A more hopeful approach would be for Israel to accept the help of third parties such as Egypt. The U.S. decision at the end of

1988 to enter the awkward Palestinian arena and to send messages of cool reason into that feverish domain has already had some positive results. It has given the United States an appropriate dominant role in the Israeli-Palestinian context. It has stimulated a positive change in the rhetoric and ideology of the Palestinian movement. It has made Palestinian nationalism anxious sensitive to American reactions. It has correspondingly weakened the Soviet monopoly in an important sector of Arab nationalist thinking.

And it has had important results on the ground. This became evident in the statement of Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin in the Knesset in March, to the effect that the armed groups in Lebanon, who are under the authority of the mainstream PLO

leadership, had abstained since last November from infiltrations or armed attack into Israel, and that, accordingly, "the Israel Defense Forces do not seek to engage them."

It is essential to press Palestinians for a more constant illustration of realism. But to assert that nothing important has already happened would be unconvincing. The immediate urgency is to restore the understandings and the reticences that made it possible to embark on a modest but useful Israeli initiative. If this is achieved, the next task will be to understand the need for innovation.

There are no dangers in an Israeli-Palestinian agreement that can compare to the volcanic certainties of a status quo that obscures our peace vision, weakens our economy, injures

our tourism, distorts our image, erodes our international friendships, divides our nation, torments the Jewish dispersion and undermines our most cherished Jewish and democratic values. To negotiate with Arab interlocutors from a position of Israeli strength does not imply any acceptance of their views on final status or boundaries.

It is natural for Israelis in the light of historic experience to be more aware of dangers than of opportunities. But this tendency must be transcended if we are ever to move out of deadlock. This is one of the rare cases in which leaving things as they are could be the most reckless of all adventures. By maintaining a policy of active presence, America can add to its many acts of service to Israel's destiny and to its own vocation of peace — The Washington Post.

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Too many, with too little to share

By Clare Pedrick



A leading member of Germany's Social-Democratic party, former Chancellor Helmut Schmidt warns about the danger of overpopulation.

economic wealth aggravated by population growth in the various regions of the world may become a source of conflict, possibly degenerating into war."

In China, a country whose 1.1 billion inhabitants account for massive 21 per cent of the world's population, leaders have warned that the problem could seriously hamper the country's plans for social and economic reform.

Said Mr. Huang Hua, a former foreign minister for China, and the Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress: "In China the population explosion is

an extremely serious problem, and it is becoming more acute every year. The annual increase in the number of people being born is 15 million, which is almost the same as the population of Australia. These people need food, clothing, water, energy, transportation, education and medical care, and when they grow up, they expect the government to find them a job. Traditionally our country is rich in natural resources, but because we are having to divide them up among so many people, the per capita ratio is lower than the world average."

According to estimates by the Chinese government, by the year 2030 the population will have reached 1.6 billion people. At this point, officials warn, China will no longer be able to feed itself. "We have calculated that this year will represent the final limit that the land can support," said Huang Hua. "The ecology will deteriorate, pollution will become more acute, and education will suffer, which in turn will have an impact on our economic and cultural development."

"Past backwardness has already meant that our education facilities have been insufficient to meet the needs of the people," he added. "There are still 200 million illiterate or semi-literate people over the age of 40 in China, and if the population continues to increase, this situation can only get worse."

China's overcrowding has already produced a problem usually only associated with non-communist nations — the specter of unemployment, which may have played a part in the tragically ended students' revolt this spring. Officials in Beijing admit that one sixth of the Chinese workforce is "surplus labour."

"Many of these people actually have no job. They are unemployed," Huang Hua said. "In such cases, the relatives provide food, clothing and housing, but in China, unemployment is beginning to cause social instability. In a society where people are expected to provide for their families, there are some who are no longer able to perform this function."

"Many people have been forced to move from the rural areas to look for jobs in the cities, which has caused problems of over-crowding," he added. "In the 10 major metropolitan centres, where the population is more than 5 million, there are problems of housing and water short-

tages. There are often power cuts, and the traffic and transportation system are chaotic. The buses are badly overcrowded; people are packed in tightly. There is a lot of pushing and shouting. It's terrible."

Since China introduced a family-planning programme, back in 1970, the birthrate has begun to slow down. The annual growth rate of 1.6 per cent in 1976 has been cut to the present figure of 1.4 per cent — lower than that of India and most African countries. What makes China the world's most pressing case, say officials, is the country's vast base population. "Our difficulty is that no matter how drastically we reduce the percentage of the birthrate, we are starting off from such a huge number of people," Huang Hua said.

China's family planning programme has centred on providing counselling in schools, neighbourhood committees and women's groups, and distributing contraceptives. Parents are offered priority schooling and medical care for their offspring if they agree to commit themselves to having just one child.

In Nigeria, Africa's most densely populated nation with 120 million citizens — one sixth of the continent's total — the government has introduced an education programme which recommends that each couple have a maximum of four children. The country's population has tripled since 1960 and is expected to rise to 162 million in the year 2000, with one of the highest rates of growth in the world. In 1986 Nigeria was world's 10th most populous country, but the United Nations has forecast that it will rank fourth, behind China, India and the USSR, but ahead of the U.S., but for the year 2025.

General Olusegun Obasanjo, who served as head of Nigeria's



Huang Hua of China sees a direct link between overpopulation and social unrest.

federal military government from 1976 to 1979, believes that the limit on children should be two per couple. "If the present policy is implemented faithfully we should begin to see a reduction in our population, but I, myself, think we should move even faster."

In China, too, education is the key word, Huang Hua noted. "In the cities, among the workers and intellectuals, the problem is not so acute. When both the husband and wife are working and leading busy lives, one child is usually enough trouble for them to cope with," he said. "In the rural areas it is different. The peasants still believe that more boys means more riches — a bigger labour force, which in turn means greater wealth. If a couple has three girls, they will often have a fourth (baby) in the hope that it will be a boy. If it is not, they have a fifth, and so on. It's almost, if not completely out of control."

Both Obasanjo and Huang Hua agreed that more help is needed from the developed countries, and in particular from the U.S., which three years ago withdrew its 25 per cent contribution to the U.N. Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), an organization setting up family planning programmes around the globe.

The U.S. Congress mandated that the U.S. stop payments to UNFPA because it claimed that China was using coercive methods of family planning, including forced abortions.

"As far as we are concerned, it's not the case," said Audun Gythfeldt, chief of the resource development unit at UNFPA. "Our own close monitoring revealed that the government policy is a voluntary one."

Said Huang Hua: "The only way to reduce the birthrate is to appeal to people's sense of duty and try to convince them that it is for their own good. You can't force them to use birth control."

"By the same token, the policy cannot work without worldwide support... The fact that the U.S. administration has cut its funding to the UNFPA is very disturbing. We are hoping fervently that the Bush administration will reconsider the decision" — World News Link.

he Berlin Wall was built 28 years ago

An anachronism that prevents the unification of Europe

By Hans-Rudiger Karatz
(IN PRESS)

chronism."

Chancellor Helmut Kohl

stated in a speech to the Bundestag:

"We shall do our utmost to keep alive the awareness of national unity and to preserve the common assets that link the people in the two parts of Germany. Our goal remains that of freedom and unity for all Germans."

Of late, leading Eastern politicians or advisers have also spoken on this subject. For example, Mr. Alexander Yakovlev, adviser to General Secretary Gorbachev, said: "We are not the ones who built the Wall — it is not our Wall. It is the affair of the German Democratic Republic. It was clearly erected under very specific circumstances." This prompted Chairman Erich Honecker to say: "The Wall will remain as long as the conditions that led to its erection do not change. It will continue to stand for fifty or even

speech delivered by President Reagan in 1987 when Berlin celebrated its 750th anniversary and he stated in front of the Brandenburg Gate, the city's main landmark: "Take the Wall Down, Mr. Gorbachev..."

"Depressing and incompatible with the basic human rights adopted by the CSCE conference in Vienna", is how Mr. Hans-Jochen Vogel, leader of the SPD opposition party in the Federal Republic of Germany, described Mr. Honecker's remark that the Wall might stand for another fifty or hundred years.

No matter how the question about the early demolition of the Wall is answered by history, the GDR has not managed to attain one of its goals — to "stifle" the Western part of Berlin. Today, 28 years after the erection of the Wall, the opposite is true:

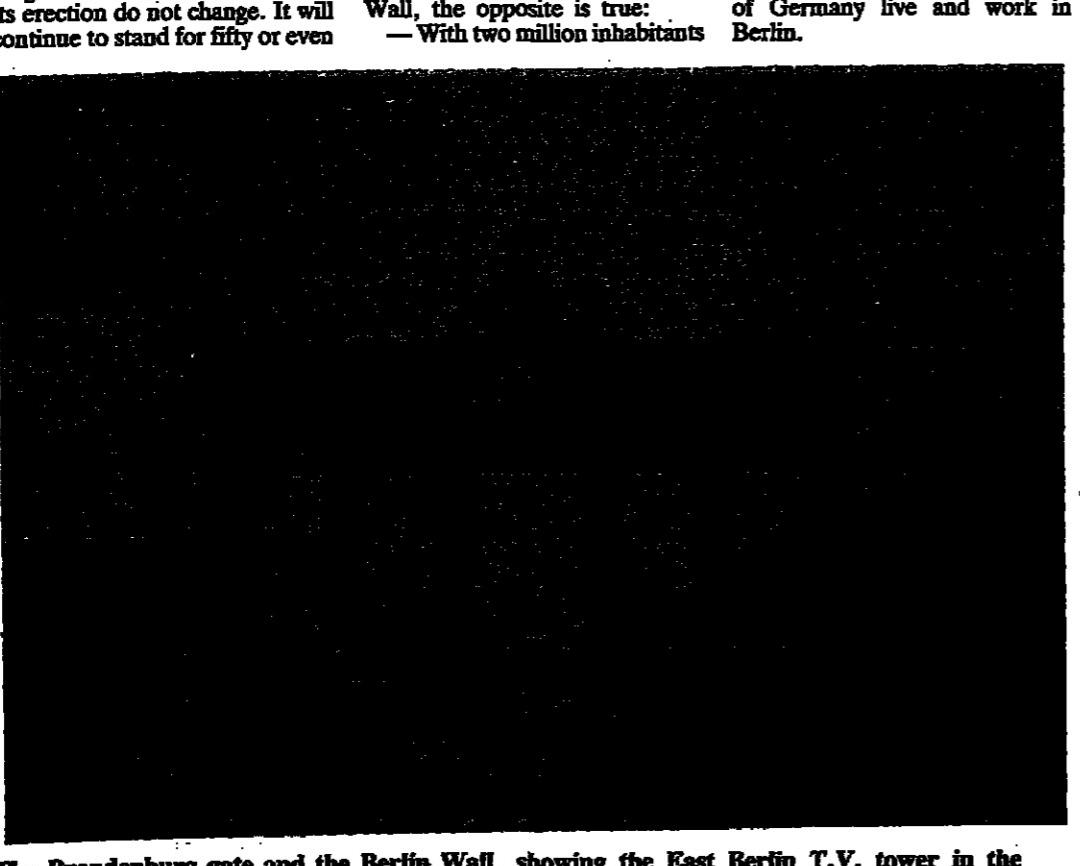
— With two million inhabitants

(870,000 of them employed), West Berlin achieves an annual gross domestic product of DM 70 billion (the value of all goods and services produced).

— Every year roughly six million tourists and congress participants visit the city. It is the world's sixth most important congress centre. This economic sector alone attains an annual turnover of about DM 2 billion.

— Annually about 26 million people from elsewhere in the Federal Republic of Germany and from Western European countries travel to West Berlin — more than three times as many in 1971 (when an agreement concluded by the four Victorious Powers — the USA, USSR, UK and France — took effect).

— Almost 12 per cent of all scientists in the Federal Republic of Germany live and work in Berlin.



The Brandenburg gate and the Berlin Wall, showing the East Berlin T.V. tower in the background.

a hundred years if the reasons for it are not eliminated."

At the Vienna Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), George Shultz, then Secretary of State of the USA, stated on behalf of President Ronald Reagan: "The Wall continues to be the symbol of the division of Europe, an inhuman edifice that merely separates people from one another and must therefore be torn down." His British counterpart, Mr. Geoffrey Howe, likewise demanded at the conference that the Wall be demolished. These two Western voices followed up the great

The first step to Mars

By Harry F. Rosenthal
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Now that

U.S. President George Bush has endorsed "a journey into tomorrow" — a tomorrow that includes

people living and working on the moon and mars — Congress will be

called to give NASA a space

haven closer to home.

It's called space station freedom, an orbiting laboratory, that was to have become a reality in 1992 but will be lucky to be built in time to greet the 21st century.

Only a few hours after Bush spoke Thursday, the station survived another financial cliffhanger in the House of Representatives, one of a long series.

When then-president Ronald

Reagan proposed the station in

1984, the cost for that single

component of a moon-mars future

was estimated to be \$8 billion.

Today's guess is \$30 billion

and some experts say even that

won't come close.

Returning to the moon and going on from there to mars would cost untold billions more and would require a buildup of NASA engineers and industrial machinery not unlike the Apollo days of the 1960s. More than 400,000 people worked on the moon programme; today, NASA and its civilian contractors employ fewer than 150,000.

One of the president's chief aides, budget Director Richard Darman, was the only administration official to say what Bush's vision might cost.

"Our current estimates are roughly — very, very roughly — that if you went to mars by the year 2020 and did so first establishing a lunar base and then going from the moon, the pricing over this 30-year period would be on the order of \$400 billion" he told reporters. The figure, he said, is in today's dollars, not figuring in inflation.

"I know it seems like a very large number but you have to remember that it is over a 30-year period," Darman said. "Obviously, it puts the system to the test. It is a question of how much one cares about the future."

Bush, in a speech that commemorated the 20th anniversary of the first landing on the moon, said pointedly that it is up to Congress to make the space

pollution control and low-income and elderly housing.

"If the Schumer Amendment had passed, it probably would have killed the space station," said Rep. Bill Nelson, a Florida Democrat, chairman of the House Space Subcommittee.

Nelson, who once rode on the space shuttle and is a strong advocate of Bush's proposals, said that NASA can't meet those goals on its present budget level of about \$10 billion a year.

"It will have to be a \$30 billion a year NASA to carry this out," he said. That would represent more than 2 per cent of the national budget — but still far

less than the 4 per cent-plus required to send Apollo to the moon.

At a White House news conference, NASA administrator Richard Truly said that even if the money were made available, NASA today could not do the job.

"We have a full plate with space shuttle flights and space station freedom," he said. "To take on extra programmes, we would need extra help — technicians and engineers and facilities. But NASA has the underlying structure, and given the money, we could flesh out."

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U.S. Senate approves \$295 billion defence bill

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House has approved a \$295 billion defence bill that suspends most production of the experimental Stealth bomber, cuts money for the space-based missile defence system and eliminates \$100 million for the Midgetman missile.

By a vote of 261-162, the House adopted a bill late Thursday that dealt a severe blow to the U.S. Defence Department budget proposed by President George Bush's administration.

While cutting administration-backed programmes, the bill includes money for the navy's F-14D jet fighter and the Marine Corps' V-22 Osprey vertical takeoff assault transport — two programmes Bush planned to scrap.

"We have pretty well shredded George Bush's strategic programmes," said Congressman Les Aspin, a member of the opposition Democratic Party and chairman of the House Armed Services Committee.

The Senate, the other legislative chamber in the U.S. Congress, narrowly turned back an amendment that could have opened the door to deep cuts in the budget for the space defence system that has been dubbed "Star Wars." The vote was 50-47 to table, and thus set aside, the amendment.

The measure sponsored by Sen. Bennet Johnston, a Democrat, would have frozen \$3.62 billion of the U.S. Defence Department's allocation for Star Wars, adding only enough to cover 3.2 per cent inflation.

U.S. inflation shoots up dramatically

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. economy turned in its most sluggish performance in almost three years from April through June as inflation shot up dramatically, the government has reported.

In a report apt to raise recession fears, the Commerce Department said the gross national product (GNP), the broadest gauge of economic health, grew at a lackluster 1.7 per cent annual rate in the spring quarter.

It was the worst growth rate since a 0.8 per cent increase in the third quarter of 1986, the last

quarter, the fastest clip in more than six years.

The pickup, from an increase of 4 per cent in the first quarter, was blamed on a sharp jump in energy prices.

The GNP report, which showed an even more sluggish economy than many analysts had been expecting, represented a setback for the government's economic forecasts.

Last week, President George Bush's administration issued a revised economic forecast predicting economic growth of 2.9 per cent for 1989.

million a copy, until the Defence Department scales back its 570-billion, 132-plane programme.

The bill also requires the administration to demonstrate that the B-2 is a proven plane before production resumes.

Bush and Defence Secretary Dick Cheney had lobbied hard for the costly aircraft. In the days before House action on the authorisation bill, the administration also pleaded its case for Star Wars.

But the House slashed \$1.8 billion from the president's request for a total of \$4.9 billion for Star Wars, officially known as the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI). The House earmarked the savings for conventional weapons cleanup of nuclear defence facilities and military drug interdiction.

In other action, the House:

- Approved an amendment limiting total outlays for defence in fiscal 1990 to \$299.2 billion.
- Adopted a non-binding resolution urging Bush to press the Soviets on dismantling their ground-based, anti-satellite weapons and to negotiate a treaty with the Soviets on imposing strict limitations on those weapons.
- Voted to prohibit use of fiscal 1990 money for army production of binary chemical weapons.
- Adopted a non-binding resolution urging Bush to step up negotiations with the Soviets on an agreement to stop production and stockpiling of lethal chemical weapons.

Sharif Zaid: Jordan will soon settle dinar's exchange rate

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Sharif Zaid ibn Shaker Thursday stressed the need for encouraging Jordanian citizens to work in the agricultural sector and voiced hope that the exchange rate of the Jordanian dinar will be settled soon, with a view to restore balance to the local market.

Sharif Zaid was speaking at a meeting for the Higher Agricultural Council, which was attended by Agriculture Minister Adnan Badran.



Prime Minister Sharif Zaid ibn Shaker Thursday attends a meeting of the Higher Agricultural Council in Amman (Petra photo)

Sharif Zaid: Jordan will soon settle dinar's exchange rate

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Sharif Zaid was speaking at a meeting for the Higher Agricultural Council, which was attended by Agriculture Minister Adnan Badran.

Badran called for studying and discussing production requirements, considering them as priorities posed by the current circumstances the country is presently passing through.

The council discussed a working paper presented by the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC) on the production and distribution of chemical fertilisers in Jordan, their uses and sources.

The council also reviewed means of meeting the local requirements of chemical fertilisers, and a programme proposed by the JPMC and the fertilisers industries to provide such kinds of fertilisers locally.

Following the review of the programme, the council approved the recommendations made by the JPMC, decided to set up a special committee to study the present prices of fertilisers and to propose reasonable prices, which can serve as incentives for the local production of these fertilisers.

British railwaymen suspend strikes

LONDON (R) — Britain's biggest rail union has ended a bitter pay dispute and suspended a campaign of 24-hour strikes which have disrupted business and brought misery to millions of commuters.

The National Union of Railways (NUR) said it had decided to accept an 8.8 per cent

pay offer which two smaller rail unions had already accepted from state-owned British Rail. The NUR rejected the offer last week.

NUR leader Jimmy Knapp said the union would keep fighting to defend national collective bargaining — a second key issue in the dispute. He called for further

talks with British Rail.

"We shall continue the campaign among members on this vital issue," he told journalists.

There were also growing signs that a second major national strike was crumbling as dockers protesting against the abolition of a jobs-for-life scheme returned to work at Britain's biggest port, Tilbury.

London's financial district rocked by new stock scandal

LONDON (AP) — A new stock scandal involving Britain's biggest bank is prompting demands for tougher policing of Europe's major financial district.

The controversy, known as the "Blue Arrow affair," has led to the reluctant resignation of the chairman of the bank, National Westminster PLC, and has damaged the bank's blue-chip reputation.

The report said that in earlier rounds, Third World governments insisted more on their demands for help from richer countries.

A government report severely criticised the conduct of Natwest officials in the 1987 sale of shares in Blue Arrow PLC, an employ-

ment services agency. The report reflects a government move to crack down on financial manipulation in Britain.

The furor has also raised questions about the adequacy of the country's framework for financial self-regulation, a system established after the 1986 "big bang" — the broad deregulation of British financial markets.

"The British style of 'leave it to an old-boy network' was all right when the old boys had standards," said legislator John Smith, financial affairs spokesman for the opposition Labour Party. "We're in a world of global finance now where these things are swept aside. We need tough enforcement."

"I think it's very clear to me standards in the city have fallen dreadfully," Smith said, referring to the city of London, the neighborhood of the capital where most major financial businesses are located.

"We've now got a whole series of these things," he told a recent gathering of the Association of American Correspondents in London.

The Blue Arrow affair follows what is known as the Guinness scandal involving the giant brewer, Guinness PLC.

Guinness admitted that its former management arranged for third parties to buy Guinness stock, apparently to inflate the share price and enhance the attractiveness of the company's successful cash-and-stock offer in 1986 for the liquor company Distillers Co.

Seven men, including Guinness' deposed chairman, Ernest Saunders, are awaiting trial on criminal charges.

The latest scandal grew out of Blue Arrow's \$1.3-billion acquisition of Manpower Inc.

Nabulsi accuses Israel of undermining dinar

AMMAN (Agencies) — Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Governor Mohammad Saeed Al Nabulsi accused Israel Thursday of trying to undermine the dinar by triggering panic-selling of the Jordanian currency in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

Nabulsi, addressing bankers and Jordanian businessmen, said Jordan planned to formalise a two-tier exchange rate due to pressure from its balance of payments deficit.

The lower rate would be for government imports of basic commodities and there would be a free market rate for commercial banks to finance private sector imports.

Nabulsi said Israel had planted rumours that Jordan is planning to replace the dinar with a new currency.

"The dinar in the West Bank has always been target for Israeli conspiracies aimed at shaking it... We felt the Israeli goal was to further perplex Jordan and to kill the spirit of struggle among the Palestinian in timer uprising," he said.

The dinar has been the main legal tender in the West Bank, where Palestinians have been in revolt for 19 months against Israeli occupation.

Nabulsi said the government has arrested Palestinian merchants who collaborated with an Israeli religious group to dump dinars onto the market.

"Imported commodities which are not price controlled would not have to comply with (the Central Bank's) exchange rate and merchants could buy foreign currency from other channels if they wish," Nabulsi told reporters following a lecture at the Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation.

The programme is designed to improve the performance of the national economy abroad in a way that replenishes the Kingdom's reserves of foreign currency and tackles the deficit in the balance of payments.

On the remittances of expatriates, Nabulsi said that it constitutes a basic source of foreign currency and that CBJ began to issue bonds in foreign currency where the interest and revenues on these bonds will also be paid in foreign currency.

His efforts will undoubtedly be exerted to surmount the economic and monetary crisis Jordan is passing through. He said that the Kingdom's ability to face problems is unlimited and that in a few years the Jordanian economy will recover.



Mohammad Saeed Nabulsi

a lot of panic and instability."

"We have repeatedly affirmed to our families there (Israeli-occupied territories) that the dinar will not change and those people have got to have faith in the dinar," Nabulsi said.

Effective early July, the CBJ began to sell foreign currency to banks and financial companies so as to meet the citizens' needs and influence the dinar's rate of exchange, Nabulsi said.

He added that a medium-term economic adjustment programme for 1989-1993 was prepared in conjunction with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to rebuild the Jordanian economy, achieve self-reliance, promote investment and exports, and rationalise consumption.

The economic programme is intended to reconstruct the national economy in order to increase the chances of genuine growth," he said.

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Nabulsi said that because of the sales of dinars, "there was a great demand for dollar in the Jordanian market, where the dollar was trading at an unrealistic rate in the black market and it caused

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

	Thursday, July 27, 1989	Deutschmark	306.4	309.5
	Central Bank official rates	Swiss franc	356.1	359.7
Buy	356.1	90.4	91.3	
Sell	357.4	91.3	91.6	
U.S. dollar	572.4	578.4	589.6	590.5
Pound Sterling	948.5	958.0	42.6	43.0
Japanese yen (for 100)	411.3	415.4	271.6	274.3
Dutch guilder	271.6	274.3		
Swedish krona	89.6	90.5		
Italian lira	42.6	43.0		
Belgian franc	146.3	147.8		
French francs				
Italian lire				
Japanese yen				
Swedish kronas				
Norwegian crowns				
Danish crowns				
U.S. dollars				

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

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U.S. dollar	Dutch guilder	271.6	274.3
Pound Sterling	Swedish krona	89.6	90.5
	Italian lira (for 100)	42.6	43.0
	Belgian franc (for 10)	146.3	147.8

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

By Reuters

SYDNEY — The share market closed mixed, with high interest rates a depressant. The All Ordinaries Index closed 1.4 points lower at 1,626.8 in active trading.

TOKYO — After a sharp rise at the opening, investors took profits most of the day and prices closed easier in moderate trading. The Nikkei Index fell 79.65 to 34,705.63.

HONG KONG — Signs of a revival in the property market pushed share prices up to end at the day's high. The Hang Seng Index rose 33.04 to 2,526.75.

SINGAPORE — Prices closed marginally higher on late buying and bargain-hunting after fairly active trading. The Straits Times Industrial Index rose 3.78 to 1,370.14.

BOMBAY — Share prices fell further on heavy selling for the second day as Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's government continued to face opposition attacks over a controversial Bofors gun deal. Tata Steel fell 25 rupees to 1,277.50.

ZURICH — Shares closed higher on large volume, with Nestle leading the gainers. The All-Share Swiss Performance Index rose 8.7 to 1,163.6, a high for the year.

LONDON — Shares retreated from their highs, ending another attempt to break the key resistance level of 2,400 points on the FTSE index which at 1442 GMT was 11.9 up at 2,295.6.

NEW YORK — Stocks slipped as investors began to pocket some of the week's profits before the weekend. The Dow was down nine at 2,626.

الجدعان

SPORTS IN BRIEF

IRANIAN OFFICIALS UNDER FIRE AFTER POOR RESULTS: A Tehran daily called Thursday for a purge of sports officials following Iran's narrow win over China in a weekend soccer World Cup qualifier. The 3-2 result all but ended Iran's chances of reaching the 1990 finals in Italy. A better goal difference could have kept Iran in the running, but now China are likely to advance after an expected win over Thailand in the last game of the group. "The time is right to rethink our sports policy and sack those responsible for its present miserable state," the Iranian news agency IRNA quoted Kayhan International as saying. "They have played enough with the future of our youth and the country's reputation." (R)

BUTCHER SIGNS NEW CONTRACT WITH RANGERS: England central defender Terry Butcher ended speculation about his future by signing a new two-year contract with Scottish champions Glasgow Rangers Thursday. Butcher, who had 12 months of an existing deal to run, reached agreement with manager Graeme Souness to stay at Ibrox until 1991 by which time he will be 32. It had been reported that English first division club Tottenham were poised to make a one-million pound sterling (\$1.66 million) bid for the player whom Souness described as a "significant factor" in Rangers' title triumph last season. (R)

YAMAHA TO CONTINUE WITH ZAKSPEED: Yamaha, hoping to compete with Honda as a major Japanese presence in Formula One, announced in Hockenheim Friday they would continue to supply engines to the West German Zakspeed team in 1990. Yamaha issued a statement making the announcement shortly after both Zakspeeds had again failed to pre-qualify for Sunday's West German Grand Prix. Zakspeed have failed to qualify for every race this season and had been desperate to gain qualification for at least one of their cars for the team's home Grand Prix at Hockenheim. Despite their dismal sequence of failures, both Yamaha and Zakspeed remained optimistic. Yamaha's Formula One engine manager M. Goroh said: "This year has not produced the results expected. However, building the foundation for any successful team is not easy. It requires a lot of time and patience as well as hard work." (R)

GIANT-KILLER UPSETS TWO SEEDS IN ONE DAY: West German Jens Woehrmann, in search of a decent world ranking, upset both top seed Jakob Hasel of Switzerland and 16th seed Jan Gunnarsson in a day of shocks at the \$350,000 Stuttgart Grand Prix tennis tournament Thursday. Altogether seven seeds fell during the day, including all of the top four. Woehrmann, world number 162, beat Hasel 6-4, 4-6, 6-3 in a second round match continued from Wednesday, leaving the world ninth-ranked Swiss stranded tame and again with lethal cross-court backhands. With most spectators still asking "Jens who?" he came out again a few hours later to polish off Gunnarsson, his Swedish third round opponent 6-4, 6-4.

GOREN BRIDGE

BY CHARLES GOREN
AND OMAR SHARIF
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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—As South, vulnerable, you What do you bid now? hold:
♦AQJ ♠954 ♦AQJ3 ♠876 Q.5—Both vulnerable, as South you The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West ♠K76 ♠8 ♦AKQ762 ♠Q32 1 ♠ Pass ?
What do you bid now?
Q.2—As South, vulnerable, you 2.0 Pass 1 ♠ Pass ? hold:
♦K962 ♠65 ♠83 ♠9842 What do you bid now?
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What action do you take?
Q.3—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♦KJ93 ♠K77 ♠763 ♠A77 North East South West The bidding has proceeded:
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass
South West North East 3 ♠ Pass ?
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass What do you bid now?
1 ♠ Pass 1 NT Pass Look for answers on Monday.
What action do you take?
For information about Charles Goren's newsletter for bridge players, write Goren Bridge Letter, P.O. Box 4436, Orlando, Fla. 32802-4436.

Q.4—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♦75 ♠AJ83 ♠Q73 ♠AJ82 The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East Pass Pass 1 ♠ Pass ?

Swimming in Jordan: art of self-motivation

By a Jordan Times
Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Excelling in a sport requires long years of hard work and continuous exercise to polish the athlete's skills and keep him in excellent physical condition.

Ali Wazani began his swimming career at the age of ten. Today, though still relatively young at 19, he is Jordan's swimming champion.

"It took a lot of time and effort, but in the end, it was worth it," Wazani said to the Jordan Times.

Achievements started when Wazani joined the beginners' swimming team and won its championship in 1979. A year later he participated in the swimming championship with Iraq, in which he scored well.

About that first experience

Wazani said: "Competing with other national groups for the first time has both its negative and positive effects on the athlete, and though it was scary, it gave me a real sense of competitiveness."

Wazani continued with the beginners' team until 1985, when he set the record for men's freestyle of 1.5 minute. After that, he joined the national swimming team and took up the 100-200 metres breast stroke.



Ali Wazani, male national champion: "Always make it a point to train at least ten times a week."

Today, Wazani's records stand unbroken with 1.6.96 minute in 100m butterfly, 1.5 minute in 100m breast stroke, 2.44.3 minute in 200m breast stroke, 2.32 in medley; thus making him Jordan's undisputed swimming champion. Though Wazani has held the records for quite a while now, he does not seem so pleased, because of the fact that national competition is very limited.

"Sometimes, the records stay unbeaten for a number of years, without, even their holders, breaking them," Wazani said.

The female swimming champion, Lara Demirjian, has a somewhat similar background. She participated in the clubs' championship at the age of eleven, then joined the national swimming team in 1982 at the age of twelve.

In 1987, Demerjian participated, for the first time in a

swimming competition abroad (in Egypt). She came in first with records of 1.3 minute in 100m breast stroke, and 3.15 minute in 200m breast stroke.

But that was only the beginning for the eager teenager, for when she participated in the 1988 Iraqi "Saddam National Championship," she not only won first place in the 100-200m breast stroke, but she was also chosen as the best swimmer in the Championship.

Demerjian, like her male counterpart, also voiced dissatisfaction about the current lack of competitiveness in the country, saying that "usually the first player scores very high records, while the second lags very far behind."

This does not at all help the winner who eventually gives up trying to improve his record because of the lack close competition."

But the lack of competitiveness does not at all affect the two swimmers' enthusiasm and determination to continue doing their best and working very hard on improving their skills.

"Though I am currently taking

a summer course at the University of Jordan, I always make it a point to train at least ten times a week, with an average of 20-24 hours," Wazani said.

The National Swimming Team trains its members only five days a week, with a daily average of two hours. According to the coach, Khamees Ghait, this load is not nearly enough. A swimmer needs much more training than that which the team is currently offering.

The government should offer more material and moral support for its youth, because we already have the raw material—a lot of energetic youth willing and able to offer the best they have to this country. All they need is an official authority to guide and steer them in the right direction," he said.

City, which, I think, and every coach believes, is hardly sufficient. It is even nothing compared to the swimming facilities offered by the neighbouring Arab countries," Ghait complained.

The coach highlighted the fact that swimming, as a sport, should begin at school, and should not be limited to a "certain social class" capable of paying the fees charged by private clubs.

"The government should offer more material and moral support for its youth, because we already have the raw material—a lot of energetic youth willing and able to offer the best they have to this country. All they need is an official authority to guide and steer them in the right direction," he said.



Lara Demirjian : lacks close competition

The coach highlighted the fact that swimming as a sport, should begin at school, and should not be limited to "a certain social class" capable of paying the fees charged by private clubs.

British runners labelled unpatriotic

LONDON (AP) — Sprinter John Regis Thursday accused Eamonn Martin and Mark Rowland of "letting down their country" by pulling out of Britain's team for next week's European Cup at Gateshead.

Martin, the national 10,000 metres record-holder, and Rowland, the Olympic steeplechase bronze medalist, angered selectors when they withdrew this week.

Regis, Britain's only world track champion, will run the 200 metres at a meet. Points there will go towards qualifying for the World Cup in September.

"If we fail to qualify by three or four points, there will be a lot of athletes who will be very bitter about them," Regis said. "Anyone who is selected should be proud and honoured to run and should not pull out unless injured. They are letting down their country."

"There should be some disciplinary action against them."

The two athletes might also have jeopardised their chances of selection for the Commonwealth Games in Auckland, New Zealand, next year.

S. African may face tennis ban

LONDON (AP) — The International Tennis Federation, anxious to keep its sport in the Olympics, said Thursday it was backing a move to expel South Africa, one of its founding members.

The ITF said it was supporting a resolution from Nigeria that the South African Tennis Union be thrown out of the 147-national organisation "until the policy of apartheid in South Africa is abandoned."

The resolution, also backed by Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, will be voted on at the ITF's annual meeting in Buenos Aires in September. No member nation ever has been expelled from the ITF.

A statement from the federation's management committee said kicking South Africa out of the FTF was "essential if the federation is to retain its membership of the Olympic games."

Officials said they wanted to avoid offending International Olympic Committee members opposed to sporting links with the racially divided nation.

ITF general manager Mike Davies said the step would not affect individual South Africans playing on the men's and women's tour. Christo Van Reeuwijk, ranked 25th among men, leads South Africa's professional players.

"I don't think the ruling will have any practical implications," Davies said. "(South Africa) players are not representing their country and ... any event that has

international competition will have to accept players of all nationalities."

The ITF said its management committee was backing the expulsion move because "South Africa's continued membership is a disruption to the development, stability and integrity of the game internationally."

Although South Africa is banned from all team tennis events, including the Olympics, Davis Cup and Federation Cup, Davies

stressed the need for more Olympic-size swimming pools and swimming facilities to improve the swimmers' potential and thus improve the country's competitiveness with other countries.

"Swimming is a summer sport in Jordan, for again, the only regulation indoor swimming pool in Jordan is that of the Sports

Baseball standings

NEW YORK (AP) — Major league baseball standings following Thursday games.

	East Division	W	L	PCT	GB
Baltimore	53	46	535		
Toronto	50	51	.495	4	
Cleveland	49	50	.495	4	
Boston	47	49	.490	4.5	
Milwaukee	48	53	.475	6	
New York	47	53	.470	6.5	
Detroit	34	65	.343	19	
West Division					
California	61	39	.610		
Oakland	60	41	.594	1.5	
Texas	55	45	.550	6	
Kansas City	55	46	.545	6.5	
Minnesota	49	51	.490	12	
Seattle	48	52	.480	13	
Chicago	43	58	.426	18.5	
National League					
East Division					
Montreal	59	42	.584		
Chicago	55	45	.550	3.5	
New York	53	46	.535	5	
St. Louis	51	46	.526	6	
Pittsburgh	44	55	.444	14	
Philadelphia	38	60	.388	19.5	
West Division					
San Francisco	60	42	.588		
Houston	58	44	.589	2	
San Diego	49	53	.480	11	
Los Angeles	48	55	.466	12.5	
Cincinnati	46	55	.455	13.5	
Atlanta	42	60	.412	18	

Mayotte storms through

WASHINGTON (AP) — Top-seeded Tim Mayotte blasted 11 aces Thursday in a 7-6, 6-3 victory over Berry Moir that put him in the quarterfinals of the Sovran Bank classic.

Mayotte, ranked no. 11 in the world, surrendered only 16 points off his serve and did not face a break point. After winning the first-set tiebreaker 7-3, he got the only service-break of the match in the eighth game of the second set.

The 28-year-old Wimbledon quarterfinalist then served out the match at 30. The final shot was, appropriately, an ace.

Brad Gilbert, the second seed, overcame a 3-6 deficit in the second-set tiebreaker 7-3, he got the only service-break of the match in the eighth game of the second set.

Mayotte, vying for his first tournament title of the year, did not face a break point in eliminating the 195th-ranked Moir in 78 minutes.

"I served great today, really well," he said. "Barry's a good player, but I held my serve pretty easily."

Peanuts



Mutt'n' Jeff



Andy Capp



JUMBLE THAT SCRABLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles. One letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

OCCIL
WARBL
AGMANE
BROSAB

Now arrange the circled letters, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here:

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumble: FLIKE AGATE THWART SHOULD. Answer: Something one's in when one's not in anything else—THE ALTOGETHER.

Way cleared for Cambodia parley

PARIS (AP) — Warring Cambodian factions have agreed on a seating arrangement for their representatives at next week's international conference on Cambodia, French officials said.

Officials of the Vietnamese-backed Cambodian government and three rebel groups that form a resistance coalition reached a compromise during a meeting at the French Foreign Ministry, a ministry spokesman said.

A solution had been sought since Tuesday, when talks between Prime Minister Hun Sen and the three resistance leaders — Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Khieu Samphan of the Communist Khmer Rouge and Son Sann of the non-Communist Khmer People's National Liberation Front — broke off over the issue.

Hun Sen rejected Sihanouk's proposal for one joint Cambodian delegation, while Sihanouk would not accept Hun Sen's proposal for two delegations — one for the Vietnamese-backed government and one grouping the three rebel organisations.

Under the compromise, Cambodia would be one entity listed alphabetically between Brunei and Canada but with four sub-delegations. The factions would be seated in alphabetical order.

The Foreign Ministry spokesman said there were no plans for

the Cambodian leaders to meet again before the international conference opens Sunday. Representatives from nearly 20 countries, including U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, were expected to attend the opening.

China, Vietnam, Britain, India, Indonesia and Thailand also were expected to send representatives.

The conference was to try to work out a peace plan and agreement on the composition of a government following the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Cambodia, scheduled to be completed by the end of September.

One subject to be discussed was verification of the Vietnamese withdrawal, which Hun Sen has promised would be complete by Sept. 27. Sihanouk claims tens of thousands of Vietnamese are now disguised as Cambodian soldiers.

Also to be considered was international supervision of elections to be held in Cambodia, possibly after formation of an interim government that would include representatives of the resistance and Hun Sen's government.

The major question appears to be what role, if any, the Khmer



HUN SEN (left), Cambodia's Vietnamese-backed prime minister; former monarch Prince Norodom Sihanouk; French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas; ex-Prime Minister of Cambodia Sou-Sann; and Khieu Samphan (foreground), pose on the steps of the chateau in the Paris suburbs of Celle-Saint-Cloud prior to the resumption of this week's talks to seek a solution for Cambodia.

Rouge would play in an interim government. Hun Sen rejects any participation by the rebel group, which is blamed for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Cambodians when the Khmer Rouge ruled the country from 1975 until

Vietnam's invasion in late 1978. Sihanouk argues the Chinese-backed Khmer Rouge, the strongest of the guerrilla forces, would continue to fight if shut out of the government, ensuring continued strife.

India to pull out Sri Lanka forces

COLOMBO (Agencies) — India will begin withdrawing its 45,000 troops from Sri Lanka Saturday, resolving a row which severely damaged relations between the countries, the two governments said Friday.

"The president of Sri Lanka, Ranasinghe Premadasa, has requested the prime minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi, to commence withdrawing the Indian peace keeping force (IPKF)," a joint statement said.

It said the pullout would begin Saturday, the deadline set by Premadasa for withdrawal to begin.

Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Ranjan Wijeratne will fly to Delhi Saturday to discuss a schedule for the withdrawal of the rest of the Indian contingent, the statement said.

It said he and his delegation would discuss the end of military operations by remaining Indian troops.

Premadasa has asked Indian troops to cease hostile operations against guerrillas of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), with whom Colombo is holding peace talks.

Wijeratne will also discuss with the Indian side safety and security

in the north and east of the island, which is inhabited mostly by Tamils, the statement said.

Premadasa scheduled a nationwide address on state-run television and radio Friday night.

"We should be grateful to the government of India for agreeing to recall the Indian army... according to my request," Premadasa said in his speech, the text of which was released in advance.

In New Delhi, the Indian government announced the two countries had signed an agreement that provided for its peacekeeping troops to begin pulling out of Sri Lanka Saturday.

The government did not say how many soldiers would leave or when the withdrawal would be completed.

In his speech, Premadasa called for Sri Lankans to work together to repair the damage from six years of ethnic violence.

"The protests staged against the continuance of the IPKF in

our country can now cease. By resorting to strikes and disruptive activities based on such protest, we are causing damage and harm to ourselves," the president said. "It is our own people who get killed. It is our own people who suffer as a result. It is our country's economy that suffers."

Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had refused to meet Premadasa's deadline for a troop withdrawal, saying a hasty pull-out could lead to more bloodshed on the troubled Indian Ocean island.

Premadasa's deadline coincided with the second anniversary of the peace accord that brought the Indian troops to Sri Lanka's northeast.

The soldiers were initially deployed to supervise the July 29, 1987, accord that promised limited autonomy to Sri Lanka's minority Tamils, who were demanding an independent nation.

Premadasa's repeated requests and Gandhi's refusal led to fears of an armed confrontation between the Indians and Sri Lankans.

But Wijeratne Thursday ruled out a military clash with Sri Lanka's powerful northeastern neighbour. "We know our limitations," he said.

COLUMN III

Road haunted

LILLEHAMMER, Norway (AP) — Highway workers have posted a road sign to warn motorists of a haunting hazard — ghosts crossing. The red and white triangular sign, illustrated with a spectre, warns drivers of a supernatural hazard some workers claim exists along a southern Norway secondary road, near a highway department vacation cabin, reports said.

"Some of our people have experienced so many strange things at the cabin that they swear there are ghosts in the area," state highway department spokesman Geir Hasle told the Norwegian news agency NTB. The cabin, formerly used by highway watchmen, is reputed to be the site of numerous unexplained incidents.

Hasle said the sign, which meets national standards, was made by the highway office to mark the 100th anniversary of the Geitanger Highway. The idea was not cleared with the highway department main office, he said. "The road isn't used much anymore so we didn't see any problem with posting the sign," Hasle told Oslo newspaper Verdens Gang.

Puccini opera scores stolen

LUCCA, Italy (R) — Handwritten scores of six early operas by Italian composer Giacomo Puccini were stolen Thursday from a museum in his home town Lucca, police said. The scores were written between 1882 and 1884 when Puccini, best known for his operas "Madame Butterfly" and "La Boheme," was in his mid-twenties.

Elastic jumping fad banned

PARIS (AP) — It is now illegal in France to tie an elastic band to your feet and jump off into the void. The practice had become a minor fad, with the courageous or reckless flinging themselves off, for example, the Eiffel Tower and bouncing headfirst several times in midair. The government issued its temporary ban after a third death this year resulting from the fad. Emmanuel Bottin, a 27-year-old Frenchman, was killed July 18 when the elastic band attaching him to a bridge in the Alps snapped on the third bounce, dropping him into the rocks 30 metres below. "This is a new and dangerous physical activity," the French interior and sports ministries said in a joint statement Thursday. "Such an activity cannot continue without serious guarantees for the safety of the participants being required of organisers." There was no indication how long it would take to draw up regulations under which the sport could resume.

'J.R.' gets new 'bad girl'

LOS ANGELES (AP) — J.R. Ewing will have a new "bad girl" to contend with this season: blond actress Kimberly Foster, who will play a vixen on "Dallas." Foster said she screamed in delight when told she had the part on the CBS television show. "It's scary going into a show that's been going for 12 years. It's kind of like I've been invited to a really big party where you don't know any of the guests," said Foster, who will be relatively new to prime-time audiences. In an unusual step, her name will appear in the main titles. "You always need someone to stir up the pot," said executive producer Leonard Katzman. "And everybody loves a bad girl." Other newcomers to the long-running series: Sasha Mitchell as a well-built man who maybe J.R.'s son; and Elizabeth Taylor's son Michael Wilding as a powerful art gallery owner.

Global weather

(major world cities)

	MIN.	MAX.	WEATHER
AMSTERDAM	17	63	72 Cloudy
ATHENS	22	72	55 Clear
BAHRAIN	31	98	40 104 Clear
BANGKOK	79	93	91 Clear
BUENOS AIRES	69	86	57 Rain
CARIO	20	86	72 Cloudy
CHICAGO	73	94	70 Clear
COPENHAGEN	13	55	21 70 Clear
FRANKFURT	11	52	26 78 Cloudy
GENEVA	15	58	28 82 Clear
HONG KONG	27	81	30 86 Cloudy
ISTANBUL	20	88	22 82 Cloudy
LONDON	17	63	55 77 Cloudy
LOS ANGELES	19	74	79 Cloudy
MADRID	21	70	37 59 Clear
MEXICO	29	84	41 106 Cloudy
MONTRÉAL	31	78	30 88 Rain
NEW YORK	14	53	23 77 Clear
NEW YORK	29	88	26 85 Cloudy
PARIS	24	75	23 82 Clear
ROME	16	64	26 79 Cloudy
SYDNEY	18	64	31 88 Cloudy
TOKYO	26	84	30 89 Cloudy
VIENNA	17	63	27 80 Cloudy

Khashoggi released on bail

Adnan Khashoggi

Khashoggi released on bail.

NEW YORK (Agencies) — Saudi financier Adnan Khashoggi has posted \$10 million bail and traded his jail cell for a 12,790-square-metre luxury apartment and an electronic monitoring bracelet.

As he left the U.S. courthouse Thursday, Khashoggi smiled and promised to stay in the country to face charges that he helped depose Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos and his wife, Imelda, defrauded the Philippines treasury.

Khashoggi, who has been in custody since his arrest in Switzerland April 18, was released after his brothers posted two \$5-million bank checks.

"I am pleased that the courts have granted me bail," he said before being driven away in a silver limousine. "I am anxious to begin work for my defence and look forward to clearing my name at trial."

Khashoggi, in the same green leisure suit he wore when he was extradited from Switzerland July 19, needed the help of federal marshals to push back reporters so he could get into his car.

He was driven to an apartment he owns in the luxury Olympic Towers building on Fifth Avenue.

His movements will be monitored by an electronic device he must wear on his ankle. He is not allowed to travel outside New York and the city's northern suburbs.

One of the Barclays Bank checks posted as bail was signed by his brother, Essam Khashoggi, and other by his half-brother, Amr Khashoggi.

His release was cleared Thursday morning when an appeals judge denied a request by prosecutors to revoke the bail package granted Tuesday by U.S. District Judge John Keenan.

Judge William Pierce of the U.S. 2nd circuit court of appeals lifted a stay on Khashoggi's release in denying the appeal.

Prosecutors had opposed his release because they claimed Khashoggi had concealed his true wealth and was likely to flee.

Earlier in the day, Khashoggi also promised Keenan he would not leave the country.

"I want to assure your honour that I will abide because I cherish the relationship with America," Khashoggi said.

He made the comment during a status conference on the case that had been previously scheduled.

Keenan set a March 14, 1990, trial date for Khashoggi, Mrs. Marcos and another defendant, the California Overseas Bank of Los Angeles.

Key leader of Filipino Communists captured

MANILA (AP) — Soldiers have captured one of the country's most prominent communist leaders and officials immediately hailed the arrest as a major setback to the 20-year-old communist insurgency.

Satur Ocampo, 50, a suspected central committee member of the banned Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), was arrested with his common-law wife, Carmela Mulay, 50, in suburban Makati district, the military said Thursday.

In an unrelated operation, troops arrested 15 other suspected rebels in raids on 23 guerrilla hideouts throughout the capital, said Brigadier-General Alexander Aguirre, Manila area commander.

With his capture, Ocampo is reported to have been driving to the end of the rebellion by the end of 1992, congratulated the military for Ocampo's arrest, calling it an "outstanding feat."

Major-General Ramon Montano, chief of the Philippine Constabulary, said Ocampo's capture was the "beginning of the end" of the communist rebellion. He said the arrest was significant because Ocampo took charge of the rebel movement's propaganda campaign.

Before his capture, Ocampo issued statements to media agencies on behalf of the National Democratic Front (NDF), an umbrella organisation of 12 Marxist groups including the CPP and its armed wing the New People's Army (NPA).

In the latest rebel statement, issued four days ago, Ocampo renewed the front's offer to declare a ceasefire if President Corazon Aquino promised to close U.S. bases here by 1991.

Both former journalists, Ocampo and Mulay served as



Satur Ocampo

posed known leaders had also been captured. This has not caused a big dent. There is a long, wide bench with responsible comrades who would take over."

The military claims to have captured about 10 central committee members since Aquino took power in 1986, although one of them, Romulo Kintanar, has since escaped.

Ocampo, who was presented to reporters at a military camp, said he and Mulay were riding in their car when another vehicle overtook and cut them off. Three pistol-wielding soldiers then jumped from the car and arrested them.

Military officials said the pair would be charged with rebellion.

With his capture, we are hoping that this effective propaganda machine will be reduced in efficiency," said Montano.

"As far as we are concerned, the capture is a breakthrough, particularly in terms of further weakening the insurgency," said Noel Tolentino, a deputy spokesman for Aquino.

With his capture, the military is the biggest unanswered question in the case. Why would Pettersson kill Palme?

The written judgment ignored the issue. During the five-week trial the prosecution intimated that Pettersson simply hated all authority. Petters-

Papandreou faces wiretapping inquiry

ATHENS (AP) — Parliament on Friday voted in favour of investigating allegations that former Socialist Premier Andreas Papandreou ran an illegal wiretapping operation.

Former ministers were involved in the illegal eavesdropping.

Papandreou, on a honeymoon with his new wife, was not in parliament.

During the often-stormy seven-and-a-half-hour debate, New Democracy deputies charged that Papandreou used facilities provided by Greece's national intelligence service, known as EYP, and the state-run Greek Telecommunications Corporation to eavesdrop on the Greek president, political foes and his own cabinet ministers.

"None of us ever complained about legal wiretaps, but this was an unprecedented network eavesdropping on politicians, journalists and even members of their party," New Democracy Leader Constantine Mitsotakis said.

The Conservatives and the Communist-dominated Coalition of the Left and Progress agreed to form a committee to probe the allegations.

Once the committee is formed it has one month to try to substantiate the allegations. If it finds that charges can be pressed, a special high court would be convened to try Papandreou.